



A
C O L L E C T I O N
O F
A N C I E N T P O E M S,

TRANSLATED FROM THE

G A L I C.

D A R G O :

A P O E M *.

THE ARGUMENT.

COMHAL, failing to Innisfail, lands on a desart isle through night. Here he meets with Dargo, who was supposed to have been lost on their return from a former expedition. To comfort Dargo, who had got some intimation of the death of his spouse Crimora, Ullin introduces the episode of Colda and Minvela. Arriving at Innisfail in the morning, they engage Armor, a chief of Lochlin, who falls in battle.---Crimoyna, who had followed Armor in disguise, is discovered at night mourning over his grave, and carried to the hall of Innisfail, where Ullin, to divert her grief, relates the story of Morglan and Minona. The next day, Comhal proposes to send her home; but, on her choosing to live in Morven, she is brought there, and becomes the second wife of Dargo.

Some time after this, Connan, at a hunting party, suggesting some doubts of Crimoyna's attachment to them, as they were at variance with her people, proposes to make trial of her love by staining Dargo with the blood of a wild boar which they had killed, and carrying him home as dead. Crimoyna was so affected with the supposed death of her husband, that, after having sung his elegy to the harp, she suddenly expired beside him.

P A R T I.

SEE! Dargo rests beneath his lonely tree, and listens to the breeze in its rustling leaf. The ghost of Crimoyna rises on the blue lake below: the deer see it, and stalk, without fear, on the

* This poem, which goes under the name of *Dan an Deirg*, has been in such estimation as to pass into a proverb; *Cach dan gu dan an Deirg*.

Perhaps it owes much of the regard paid it, to that tender and plaintive, tho' simple, air to which it is still sung. There are few who have any at all of Ossian's poems,

the upland rock. No hunter, when the sign is seen, disturbs their peace; for the soul of Dargo is sad and the swift-bounding companion of his chace howls beside him.—I also feel thy grief at my heart, O Dargo; my tears tremble as dew on the grafts, when I remember thy woful tale.

COMHAL sat on that rock, where now the deer graze on his tomb. The mark of his bed are three gray stones and a leafless oak; they are mantled over with the moss of years. His warriors rested around the chief. Leaning forward on their shields, they listened to the voice of the song. Their faces are fidelong turned; and their eyes, at times, are shut. (The bard praised the deeds of the king, when his blasting sword and the spear of Innisfail † rolled before them, like a wreath of foam, the battle.

THE song ceased; but its sound was still in our ear, as the voice

poems, but can repeat, at least, some part of Dargo.

As the narration of this poem, however, is put for the most part in the mouth of Ullin, and as the transactions of it suit his time better than Ossian's, who, if then born, must have been very young, we may suppose *Dan an Deirg* to have been the composition of Ullin. Of this hoary and venerable bard, Ossian always speaks with reverence, and ascribes to him many episodes in his larger poems.

† As the names of *Lochlin*, *Erin*, and *Innisfail*, often occur in this and some of the other poems that follow, it may be proper to remember, that by *Lochlin* is meant Norway, or Scandinavia in general; by *Erin*, Ireland; and by *Innisfail*, a part of the same country inhabited by the

Falans. Sometimes *Innisfail* seems to denote some of the Hebrides; and *Innisteire* stands always for the Orkneys, or at least the greatest part of them.---It may be also proper to observe the footing on which the kings of Morven or Caledonia were with these neighbouring countries. With the inhabitants of *Innisfail* and *Innisteire*, they generally lived on good terms; and seem to have been their superiors. With the legal sovereigns of *Erin* and their people they were nearly allied; and frequently assisted them against the usurpations of the Firbolg, and the incursions of the Scandinavians. With their southern neighbours, beyond the friths of Forth and Clyde, the kings of Morven seem to have had very little friendly intercourse.

voice of the gale when its course is past. Our eyes were turned to the sea. On the distant wave arose a cloud.) We knew the skiff of Innisfail. On its masts we saw the Cran-tara * hung. “Spread,” said Comhal, “the white wings of my sails. On the waves we fly to help our friends.”

NIGHT met us, with its shades, on the deep. Waves lifted before us their white breasts, and in our sails was the roar of winds.

“THE night of storms is dark; but a desart isle is nigh. It spreads its arms like my bow when bent, and its bosom, like the breast of my love, is calm. There let us wait the light; it is the place where mariners dream of dangers that are over.”

OUR course is to the bay of Botha. The bird of night howled above us from its grey rock. A mournful voice welcomed its ful- len note from a cave. “It is the ghost of Dargo †,” said Comhal; “Dargo, whom we lost returning from Lochlin’s wars.”

WAVES lifted their white heads among the clouds. Blue moun- tains rose between us and the shore. Dargo climbed the mast to look for Morven; but Morven he saw no more. The thong broke in his hand; and the waves, with all their foam, leapt over his red wandering hair. The fury of the blast drove our sails, and we lost sight of the chief. We raised the song of grief in his

praise,

* The Cran-tara means in general a signal of distress. It was properly a piece of wood half-burnt, and dipt in blood, which was conveyed with all possible ex- pedition from one hamlet to another in cases of imminent danger. The *Cran- tara* signifies the “beam of gathering;” and the fire and blood might intjmate

either the danger apprehended from the invaders, or a threatening to such as did not immediately repair to the chieftain’s standard.—The custom seems to have been common to other northern nations. See Ol. Mag. p. 146.

† *Dargo*, “red-haired;” *Comhal*, “mild brow.”

praise, and bade the ghosts of his fathers convey him to the place of their rest.

BUT they heard us not, said Comhal ; his ghost still haunts these dreary rocks. His course is not on sunny hills ; on green mossy vales in Morven. Ye ghosts of woody Lochlin, who then pursued us in the storm ; vain is your attempt, if you think to detain Dargo. Your numbers may be many, but you shall not prevail. Trenmor † shall come from Morven's clouds, and scatter, with his blast, your dim forms. Your curling mists, like the beard of the thistle of Ardven, shall fly before the ruler of the storm.—And thou, Dargo, shalt ride with him, on the skirt of his robe, and rejoice with the air-borne sons of thy people.—Raife, Ullin, the song, and praise his deeds : he will know thy voice, and rejoice in the sound of his fame. And if any of the ghosts of Lochlin are near, let them hear of the coming of Trenmor.

PEACE to thy soul, said Ullin, as he reared his voice ; peace to thy soul, dweller of the caves of the rock ; why so long in the land of strangers ? Art thou forced to fight the battle of clouds with Lochlin's ghosts, alone ; or do the thousand thongs of air confine thee ? Often, O Dargo, didst thou contend with a whole host ; and, still, thy ghost maintains the unequal combat. But Trenmor shall soon come, and lift the broad shield and airy blade in thine aid. He will pursue the troubled ghosts of Lochlin before him, like the withered leaf of Malmor's oak, when it is caught in the folds of the whirlwind.—Peace to thy soul, till then,

† *Trenmor*, “ tall and mighty ;” the great-grandfather of Fingal.

then, O Dargo: and calm be thy rest, thou dweller of the rock, in the land of strangers.

AND dost thou bid me remain on this rock, bard of Comhal; will the warriors of Morven forsake their friend in the hour of danger? cried Dargo, as he descended from the steep of his cliff.

GALCHOS knew the voice of Dargo, and made the glad reply he was wont when called to the chace; the chace of the dun-bounding sons of the desart. Quick, as an arrow in air, he springs over waves. His feet are scarce bathed in the deep. He leaps to the breast of Dargo.—The dim-twinkling stars looked, through the parted clouds, on their meeting of joy. It was like the embrace of friends, when they meet in the land of strangers, after the flow years of absence.

How, said Comhal, is Dargo alive! How didst thou escape ocean's floods, when they rolled their billows over thy head, and hid thee in their foam?

THE waves, said Dargo, drove me to this rock, after toiling a whole night in the stream. Seven times, since, has the moon wasted its light and grown again: but seven years are not so long on the brown heath of Morven. All the day I sat on that rock, humming the songs of our bards; while I listened to the hoarse sound of the waves, or the hoarser screams of the fowls that rode on their top. And, in the night, I conversed with the ghosts and the owl; or stole on the sea-fowl that slept on the beachy rock.—Long, Comhal, was the time; for slow are the steps of the sun, and scarce-moving is the moon that shines on this lonely place.—But why these silent tears, what mean these pitying looks? They are not for my tale of wo; they are for Crimora's death. I know

she is not: for I saw her ghost, sailing on the low-skirted mist, that hung on the beams of the moon; when they glittered, through the thin shower, on the smooth face of the deep. I saw my love, but her face was pale. The briny drops were trickling down her yellow locks, as if from ocean's bosom she had rose. The dark course of the tears was on her cheek, like the marks of streams of old, when their floods overflowed the vale. I knew the form of Crimora. I guessed the fate of my love. I raised my voice, and invited her to my lonely rock. But the virgin-ghosts of Morven raised the faint song around the maid. It was like the dying fall of the breeze in the evening of autumn; when shadows slowly grow in Cona's vale, and soft sounds travel, through secret streams, in the gale of reeds. The listening waves, bending forward, stood still, and the screaming sea-fowl were quiet, while the tender air continued.

“ COME,” they said, “ Crimora * , to Morven; come to the hills of woods; where Sulmalda, the beauteous love of Trenmor, bends the airy bow, and pursues the half-viewless deer of the clouds. Come, Crimora, and forget thy grief in the land of our joy.”

SHE followed; but left me a pitying look, and I thought I heard her sigh. It was like the distant wave on the lonely shore, when the mariner hears its moan from the mouth of his cave, and fears the coming storm. Still I listened; but the soft music ceased: the fair vision vanished. It vanished like the hunter's dream of love, when the sound of the horn, on the heath, awakes him. I cried; but they heard me not. They left me to mourn on my solitary rock; like the dove which his mate hath forsaken.—Since that

time,

* Crimora, “ large, or generous heart.” Sul-malda, “ mild-looking eye.”

time, my tears have always begun with the dawn of the morning, and descended with the shades of the night.—O when shall I see thee again, Crimora! Tell me, Comhal, how died my love.

THEY love heard of thy fate, and three suns beheld her white hand support her bending head. The fourth saw her steps on the winding shore, looking for the cold corse of Dargo. The daughters of Morven beheld her from their mountains. They descended, in silence, along their blue streams. Their sighs lift their wandering hair, their soft hands wipe away the dimming tear.—They came, in silence, to comfort Crimora; but in her bed of ooze, they found the maid. They found her cold as a wreath of snow; fair as a swan on the shore of Lano.—The gray stone and green turf on Morven's shore, now compose Crimora's dwelling.—The daughters of Morven mourned her fate, and the bards praised her beauty.—So may we, Dargo, live in renown; so may our fame be found, when we moulder in the narrow house!

—BUT see that light of Innisfail; see the Crantara fly? Danger is nigh the king. Spread the sail, and ply the oar; swift fly the bark over the sea. Let our speed be to yonder shore, that we may scatter the foes of Innisfail.

THE breeze of Morven comes to our aid. It fills the wide womb of our sails with its breath. Our mariners rise on their oars, and lash the foaming waves on their gray-bending head. Each hero looks forward to the shore! each soul is already in the field.—But the eye of Dargo is bent downwards, as he sits in the silence of his grief. His head rests on his arm, over the dark edge of his father's shield. Comhal observes the mournful chief; he observes his tears, dim-wandering, through the boffy plain of his

shield ; and he turns his eye on Ullin, that he may gladden his soul with the song.

“ **COLDA** † lived in the days of Trenmor. He pursued the deer round Etha’s bay. The woody banks echoed to his cry, and the branchy sons of the mountain fell. Minvela saw him from the other side. She would cross the bay in her bounding skiff. A blast from the land of the strangers came. It turned the boat on the stormy deep. Minvela rose on its back. Colda heard her cries.—‘ I die,’ she said, ‘ Colda ! my Colda, help me !’

“ **NIGHT** drew its mantle over the wave. Fainter her voice sounded in his ear; fainter it echoed from the shelving banks. Like the distant sound of evening streams, it died at length away, and sunk in night.—With morning he found her on the sounding beach. Her blood was mixt with the oozy foam.—He raised her gray stone on the shore, nigh a spreading oak and murmuring brook. The hunter knows the place, and often rests in the shade when the beams of the sun scorch the plain with the noon-day heat.

† The episode of Colda is often repeated by itself, but the circumstances of the poem leave no room to doubt of its proper place being here. As it is beautiful, and not long, I take the liberty of inserting it for the sake of the Galic reader.

Ri linn Threinmhoir nan fja'
Rusig Caoilte am fis' mu Eite;
Thuit leis daimh chabhrach nan eoc,
‘Scho-fhreagair gach fiochd da eige.
Chunnait Min-bheul a gaol,
‘S le curach faoin chaidh na dhoil.
Sheid oifia choimheach gun bhaigh,
‘S chuir i druim an aird air a barca.
Chualas le Caoilte a glaoth
“ A Ghaoil, a Ghaoil, dean mo cho’nadhd.”

Ach thuirling dall-hhrat na h oidhche
'S dh'shailnich a caoi-chora'.
Mar fhuaim fruthain ann cein,
Rainig a h eigh ga chluasan,
'S air madain ann ou'adh na tragh
Fhuaras gun chail an og-bhean.
Thog e'n 'n cois tragh a leachd
Aig fruthain broin nan glas-ghenagan;
'S iul don t Sealgair an t aite,
Smor a bhaigh ris ann teas na greine.
'S bu chian do Chaoilte ri bronn
Feadh an lo, ann coillteach Eite,
'S fed na h oidhche chluinnt a leon;
Chuircadh e air eois an uisge deisinn.
Ach bhual Trenmor beum-fgeithe,
'S da ionsuidh, le buaidh, leum Caoilte;
Uigh air uigh phill a ghean,
Chual e chliu, 's lean e'n t feilge.

heat.—Colda long was sad. All day, through Etha's woody banks, he strayed alone. All night the listening sea-fowl, with his moan on the shore, were sad.—But the foe came, and the shield of Tremor was struck. Colda lifted the spear, and they were vanquished. His joy, by degrees, returned; like the sun, when the storm on the heath is past. He pursued again the brown deer of Etha, and heard his fame in the song of the bards.”

I REMEMBER, said Dargo, the chief. Like the faint traces of a dream that is long since past, his memory travels across my soul. Often he led my infant steps to the stone on the banks of Etha. The tear, as he leaned on its gray moss, would fall from his grief-red eye: he would wipe it away with his snowy locks. When I would ask him why he wept?—“Yes,” he would reply, “it is here Minvela sleeps.” And when I would bid him cut me a bow; “It is,” he would say, “the tomb of my love indeed. O let it be thy haunt, when thou shalt hereafter pursue the chace, and rest at noon till the warm beam is over!”—And often I did sit, O Colda, over her tomb and thine, while I gave thy fame to the mournful song. O that my renown, like thine, might survive, when I myself am high, on these clouds, with Crimora!

AND thy fame shall remain, said Comhal.—But see these shields, rolling like moons in mist. Their bosses glitter to the first gray beams of the morning. The people of Lochlin are there; and the walls of Innisfail tremble before them. The king looks out at his window; and, through the dimness of his tears, beholds a gray cloud. Two drops fall on the stone on which he leans; he perceives that our sails are the gray cloud. The tear of joy starts into his eye, “Comhal, he cries, is near!”

LOCHLIN too hath seen us, and bends his gathered host to meet us. Armor leads them on, tall above the rest, as the red stag that heads the herd of Morven. Against me he lifts that hand, from which I loosed the thongs on the shore of Erin. Let each, my friends, gird on his sword, and bound ashore on his spear. Let each remember the deeds of his former days, and the battles of Morven's heroes.—Dargo, spread thy broad shield: Carril, wave thy sword of light: Connal, shake thy spear, that often strewed the plain with dead: And, Ullin, raise thou the song, to spirit us on to battle *.

WE met the foe. But they stood, firm, as the oak of Malmor, that does not bend before the fury of the storm. Innisfail saw, and rushed from their walls to help us. Lochlin was then blasted before us, and its dry branches strewed in the course of the tempest. Armor met the chief of Innisfail; but the spear of the king fixed his thick shield to his breast. Lochlin, Morven, and Innisfail wept for the early fall of the chief; and his bard began the mournful song in his praise.

“ Tall wert thou, Armor, as the oak on the plain: swift as the eagle's wing was thy speed; strong, as the blast of Loda, thy arm; and deadly, as Lego's mist †, thy blade! Early art thou gone to the airy hall: why, thou mighty, art thou fallen in youth? Who

shall

* To sing the *Brofnacha-catha*, or “the incitement to war,” was part of the office of the bards.

† The lake of Lego in Ireland, and the lake of Lano in Scandinavia, have the same noxious quality ascribed to their vapours by the ancient bards. In this simile, some repeat the one, and some the

other. Lano, in the mouth of a Scandinavian bard, might be more proper; but Lego seems to suit better with the verse, and makes the sound smoother.

Bha t airde mar dharaig 'sa gheann.
Do lua's mar iolair nam beann gun gheilt;
Do spionna mar ofna' Lodda na fheirg,
'S do lann, mar cheo Leige, gun leigheas.

† The

shall tell thy aged father, that he has now no son; or who shall tell Crimoina that her love is dead?—I see thy father, bending beneath the load of years. His hand trembles on the pointlesf spear; and his head, with its few gray hairs, shakes like the aspen leaf. Every distant cloud deceives his dim eye, as he looks, in vain, for thy bounding ship. Joy, like a sun-beam on the blasted heath, travels over his face of age, as he cries to the children at their play, ‘I behold it coming.’ They turn their eye on the blue wave, and tell him they see but the failing mist. He shakes, with a sigh, his gray head, and the cloud of his face is mournful.—I see Crimoina smiling in her morning dream. She thinks thou dost arrive in all thy stately beauty. Her lips, in half-formed words, hail thee in her dream, and her joyful arms are spread to clasp thee.—But, alas! Crimoina, thou only dreamest. Thy love is fallen. Never more shall he tread the shore of his native land. In the dust of Innisfail his beauty sleeps! Thou shalt awake from thy slumber to know it, Crimoina; but when shall Armor awake from his long sleep? When shall the heavy slumber of the tenant of the tomb be ended? When shall the sound of the horn awake him to the chace? When shall the noise of the shield awake him to the battle?—Children of the chace, Armor is asleep, wait not for his rising; for the voice of the morning shall never reach his dwelling: sons of the spear, the battle must be fought without him; for he is asleep, and no warning bōs shall awake him.—Tall wert thou †, Armor, as the oak

† The ancient bards frequently conclude their episodes with a repetition of the first stanza. Instead of this, however, many repeat here the following verses:

Beannachid air anam an taoich
Bu gharg fraoch ri dot 's gach greis,
Ard Ri' Lo'icann, ceann an t-flusigh,
'S iomad ruraig a chuire' leis.
“ Peace to the soul of the hero whose
wrath

oak on the plain. Swift as the eagle's wing was thy speed: strong, as the blast of Loda ^{*}, thy arm; and deadly, as Lego's mist, thy blade."

THE bard ceased. The tomb of Armor was reared; and his people, with slow unequal steps, departed. Their nodding masts are heavy on the deep. Their songs are heard, at times; but their sound is mournful. They are like the sigh of mountain-winds in the waving grass of the tomb, when the night is dark and the vales are silent.

P A R T II.

THE tales of the years that are past, are beams of light to the soul of the bard. They are like sun-beams that travel over the heath of Morven; joy is in their course, though darkness dwells around.—Joy is in their course, but it is soon past; and the path of darkness, like the shadow of mist, pursues them. It will soon overtake them on the mountains, and the footsteps of the glad beams will cease to be seen. Thus the tale of Dargo travels over my soul, a beam of light, though the gathering of clouds is nigh it.—Shine on, O beam, as thou didst in the strife of Armor, when the

strength

wrath in the strife of war was deadly. Peace to the people's chief, and to Lochlin's king; often did the vanquished fly before him."

* The Loda, or Lodda, of Ossian, is supposed to have been the same with the Odin or Woden of the Scandinavians.

This hero was more ancient than Homer; as his son Skiole was, according to the Danish chronologies, a thousand years older than Pompey. His many conquests and warlike exploits seem to have procured him divine honours from his countrymen, after his death.

strength of the bard was great, and his soul swelled, like Fingal's sail, in the storm of danger.

WE * turned in, that night, to the gray tower of Innisfail, and rejoiced in the song and the shell. The burst of grief, at times, reaches our ears. "Ullin and Sulma, examine whence it comes."

WE find Crimoina stretched on the grave of Armor.—When the battle had ceased, and her lover had fallen, she too had sunk in her secret place. All day, beneath the shade of a young oak she lay. At night, she made her bed on the grave of her love.—We gently tore her from her place, as our tears descended in silence. The grief of the virgin was great, and our words were uttered only in sighs.

WE brought her to the halls of Innisfail; and sorrow came, like a cloud, on every face. Ullin, at length, took the harp, and bade it give its tenderest air. Slow, solemn, and soft, his fingers steal along the trembling strings. The sound melts the soul. It calms the tumult of wo in the breast.

† " WHO bends, he said, from his airy cloud ! who pours the
T piteous

* Upon the authority of the tale, a sentence or two are here thrown in to conduct the narration, as the verse is deficient.

† The smooth and elegiac strain of this episode, when set off with all the charms of music, could not fail to affect every person possessed of any sensibility of heart. For the sake of those who may understand the original, it is here subjoined.

Co fo murling on cheo!

Sa doirtadh a leon air a ghaioth?

O's domhain a chreacach tha na chliabh;

'Sis doilleir am fiadh ud ra thaobh!

Sud taibhse Mhorghlain na mais'

Triath Sli'-ghlais nan ioma' fruth;

Thainig e gu Morbheinn le ghaol

Inghenan Shora bu chaoine cruth.

Thog eisín r'ar n'aonach gun bhaigh.

Min'onn dh'fhasg e na tigh.

Thuirling dall-cheo le oidhche na nial.

Dh'eigh na fruthaibh;—fhan na tsilife.

Thug an og-bhean ful ris an t'fliabh,

S chunnacas le'a fiadh ro'n cheo:

Tharruign i'n t'freang le rogha beachd :

Fhuaras an gath ann uchd an oig!

Thiolais fian 'san tulach an laoch,

Le gath is cuibhne na chaoil-tigh.

B'aill le Min'onn luidh fa' fhoid;

piteous sigh on the wind! The dark wound is still in his breast, and the half-viewless deer is beside him? Who is it but the ghost of the fairest Morglan, king of the streamy Sliglas?—He came with the foe of Morven, and pursued the deer of our land. His love was with him; the fair-haired, white-handed, daughter of Sora. Morglan had gone to the hill: Minona staid in the booth. The thick mist descends. Night comes on, with all its clouds. The torrent roars in its fall. Ghosts shriek along its hollow-founding course. Minona looks for her love. She half-espies a deer, slow-moving in the mountain mist. Her hand of snow is on the bow. She draws the string. The arrow flies. Oh! that it had erred farther from the mark. The deer is borne by her Morglan. The arrow is found in his youthful breast!

“WE reared the hero’s tomb on the hill, and placed the arrow and the horn of the deer in his darkly silent house. There, too, his bounding dog was laid, to pursue the airy deer.—Minona would sleep with her love. But we sent her home to her land; where she, long, was sad. But her grief wasted away with the stream of years; and she now rejoices with Sora’s maids, though, at times, her sighs are heard.—Who bends from his airy cloud? who pours his sigh on the wind? The dark wound is still in his breast, and the half-viewless deer is beside him.”

DAY came to Innisfail, with its gray-dark light. Take, Ullin, thy ship, said Comhal, and bring Crimoina to her land; that, in the midst of her friends, she may again rejoice, like the moon when

Ach phill i, le bron, da tir.
Bu tron a tuilte, 's bu chian :
Ach futh bhliainndh chaith air falbh e.

Tha i 'nois subhach le oigh'ean Shora,
Mur cluinntear a bron air uairibh.—
Co fo tuirling, &c.

when it lifts its head through clouds and smiles on the valley of silence.

BLESSED, said Crimoina, be the chief of Morven, the friend of the feeble in the day of their danger!—But what should Crimoina do in her land; where every rock and hill, every tree and murmuring brook, would awake her slumbering sorrow? The youths whom I scorned, when they would behold me, would laugh, and say, Where is now thy Armor? You may say it, but I will not hear you; I live in a land that is distant. I end my short day with the maids of Morven. Their hearts, like that of their king, will feel for the unhappy.

WE brought Crimoina with us to our land. We gave her fair hand to Dargo. But still, at times, she was sad; the secret streams, as they passed, heard on their banks her sigh.—Crimoina, thy day, indeed, was short. The strings of the harp are wet, while the bard repeats thy tale.

ONE day as we pursued the deer on Morven's darkly heath, the ships of Lochlin appeared on our seas, with all their white sails, and nodding masts. We thought it might be to demand Crimoina. “I will not fight,” said Connas of the little soul, “till I first know if that stranger loves our race. Let us pursue the boar, and dye the robe of Dargo with his blood. Then let us carry the body of her husband home, and see how she will mourn for his loss.”

WE heard, in an evil hour, the advice of Connas. We pursued the foaming boar. We brought him low in the echoing woods. Two held him in all his foam, while Connas pierced him through with the spear.

DARGO lay down, and we sprinkled him over with the blood.

We bore him on our spears to Crimoina; and sung, as we went along, the song of death. Connas ran before us with the skin of the boar. I slew him, he said, with my steel; but first his deadly tusk had pierced thy Dargo. For the spear of the chief was broke, and the loose rock had failed below him.

CRIMOINA heard the tale of the tomb. She saw her Dargo brought home, as dead. Silent and pale she stood, as the pillar of ice that hangs, in the season of cold, from the brow of Mora's rock. At length she took her harp, and touched it, soft, in praise of her love. Dargo would rise, but we forbade till the song should cease; for it was sweet as the voice of the wounded swan, when she sings away her soul in death, and feels in her breast the fatal dart of the hunter *. Her companions flock, mournful, around; they

* This simile is differently expressed; being sometimes derived from the *swan*,

(Mar bhinn-ghuth *calaidh* 'n guin bais),

and sometimes from the *minstrel*, which is expressed by a word of nearly the same sound, (mar bhinn-ghuth *fluidh*, &c.) with a slight variation in the rest of the stanza.---Which of the words was originally used by Ullin, is uncertain; but the first is here retained as the most beautiful, though perhaps the most exceptionable, reading. The singing of the swan has been always considered as a dream of the Greek and Latin poets: and though the Celtic may need no defence, as his expression is so dubious and so differently repeated; yet, in support of them, I must observe, that it is universally affirmed in the west of Scotland, as an undoubted fact, that the wild swans which frequent these parts in winter, and which are spe-

cifically different from the tame, emit some very melodious notes on certain occasions; particularly when two flocks of them meet, when they are wounded, and when about to take their flight, being birds of passage in these countries. Their note has, in the Galic, a particular name, which would not readily be the case if the thing had not a foundation in nature: and there is likewise a tune or song called *Luineag na h Ealui*, "the swan's ditty," the words and air of which are in imitation of this bird's singing. A part of this *Luineag* is here subjoined.

Gu'eug-i	Gu'eug-o
Sgeula mo dhunach	
	Gu'eug-i
Rinn mo leire'	
	Gu'eug-o
Mo chasan dubh	
	Gu'eug-i
'Smi sein gle' gheal	
	Gu'eug-o

they assuage her pain with their song, and bid the ghosts of swans convey her soul to the airy lake of the clouds. Its place is above the mountains of Morven.

“ BEND,” she said, “ from your clouds, ye fathers of Dargo; bend, and carry him to the place of your rest. And ye maids of Tremor’s airy land, prepare the bright robe of mist for my love. O Dargo, why have I loved, why was I beloved so much! Our souls were one; our hearts grew together, and how can I survive when they are now divided?—We were two flowers that grew in the cleft of the rock; and our dewy heads, amidst sun-beams, smiled. The flowers were two; but their root was one. The virgins of Cona saw them, and turned away their foot; ‘ They are lonely,’ they said, ‘ but lovely.’ The deer, in his course, leaped over them; and the roe forbore to crop them. But the wild boar, relentless, came. He tore up the one with his deadly tusk. The other bends over it his drooping head; and the beauty of both, like the dry herb before the sun, is decayed.

“ My sun on Morven now is set, and the darkness of death dwells around me. My sun shone, how bright! in the morning; its beams it shed around me, in all its smiling beauty. But ere evening it is set, to rise no more; and leaves me in one cold, eternal, night. Alas, my Dargo! Why art thou so soon set? Why is thy late-smiling face o’ercast with so thick a cloud? Why is thy warm heart so soon grown cold, and thy tongue of music grown so mute!—Thy hand, which so lately shook the spear in the battle’s front, there lies cold and stiff: and thy foot, this morning the foremost in the fatal chace, there lies, dead as the earth it trod. From afar, o’er seas, and hills, and dales, have I followed till this day, my love! thy

thy steps.—In vain did my father look for my return; in vain did my mother mourn my absence. Their eye was often on the sea; the rocks often heard their cry. But I have been deaf, O my parents, to your voice; for my thoughts were fixed on Dargo.—O that death would repeat on me his stroke! O that the wild boar had also torn Crimoina's breast! Then should I mourn on Morven no more, but joyfully go with my love on his cloud!—Last night, I slept on the heath by thy side; is there not room, this night, in thy shroud? Yes, beside thee I will lay me down: with thee, this night too, I will sleep, my love, my Dargo *!"

WE heard the faltering of her voice: we heard the faint note dying in her hand. We raised Dargo from his place. But it was too late. Crimoina was no more. The harp dropped from her hand. Her soul she breathed out in the song. She fell beside her Dargo.

HE raised her tomb, with Crimora, on the shore; and hath prepared the gray stones for his own in the same place.

SINCE then, twice ten summers have gladdened the plains; and twice ten winters have covered with snow the woods. In all that time, the man of grief hath lived in his cave, alone; and listens only to the song that is sad. Often I sing to him in the calm of noon, when Crimoina bends down from her flakey mist.

* A stanza or two more, which are sometimes added to this lament of Crimoina, are omitted; as there is here, especially in the original, a kind of pause, which seems to have been intended for the conclusion.

'S rinneadh leaba dhuinn an raoir,
Air an raon ud chnoc nan fealg;
'S ni'n deantar leab' air leth a nochd dhuinn,
S' ni'n fgarar mo chorpa'm Dhearg.—

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L* :

A P O E M.

THE ARGUMENT.

OSSIAN, having retired, through night, to the ruins of Fingal's palace, to lament the. his reverse of fortune, lights upon a piece of an old shield, which he recognizes to be that of Gaul, the son of Morni.---This circumstance introduces the history of an expedition of Fingal to Ifrona, whither Gaul had followed him, but did not arrive there till Fingal had departed. Gaul, after a brave resistance, is at length overpowered by numbers, and left upon the shore dangerously wounded. Here his spouse Evirchoma (whose anxiety had led her to come with her child to meet him) finds him, and attempts to carry him home. But the wind proving contrary, and Gaul dying of his wounds, she is so overcome with toil and grief, that she is obliged to desist, and stop in the shelter of a small isle, where Ossian, who had gone in quest of her and Gaul, finds both expiring. He carries them to Strumon; the desolate appearance of which is described, with the lamentation of Fingal over Gaul, who had been one of his chief heroes.---This poem is addressed to Malvina, the daughter of Toscar.

AWFUL is the silence of night. It spreads its mantle over the vale. The hunter sleeps on the heath. His gray dog stretches his neck over his knee. In his dreams he pursues the sons of the mountain, and with joy he half-awakes.

SLEEP

* Gaul the son of Morni was a distinguished character in the wars of Fingal, and consequently in the poems of Ossian. This piece, which celebrates his memory, is in the original called *Tiomna 'Ghuill*. It is still pretty well known; but the most common editions of it are a good deal adulterated by the interpolations of the

Ur-sgeuls, or "later tales." It begins in this manner:

Nach tiamhaidh tofd fo na h-oidhche,
Si taosgadh a duil'neoil air gleanntaibh!
Dh'aom suain air iuran na seilge
Air an raon, fa chn ra ghluin.
Clanna nan flabhdh tha e 'reuga'
Na ailsing, 'fa shuain ga threigfin.

SLEEP on, and take thy rest, light-bounding son of the chace; Ossian will not disturb thee. Sleep on, ye sons of toil; the stars are but running their mid-way course, and Ossian alone is awake on the hills. I love to wander alone, when all is dark and quiet. The gloom of night accords with the sadness of my soul; nor can the morning sun, with all his beams, bring day to me.

SPARE thy beams then, O sun! like the king of Morven, thou art too lavish of thy bounty. Dost thou not know thy light, like his, may one day fail. Spare thy lamps which thou kindlest, by thousands, in thy blue hall above; when thou thyself retirest to thy repose, below the dusky gates of the west. Why should thy lights fail, and leave thee in thy mournful halls, alone, as his friends have done to Ossian? Why, mighty beam, shouldest thou waste them on Morven; when the heroes have ceased to behold them; when there is no eye to admire their green-sparkling beauty?

MORVEN, how have thy lights failed! Like the beam of the oak in thy palaces, they have decayed, and their place is the dwelling of darkness. Thy palaces themselves, like those who rejoiced within them, are fallen on the heath, and the thick shadow of death surrounds them. Temora is fallen; Tura is an heap; and Selma is silent. The sound of their shells is long since past. The song of their bards and the voice of their harps are over. A green mound of earth, a moss-clad stone lifting through it here and there its gray head, is all that preserves their memory. The mariner beholds, no more, their tall heads rising through clouds, as he bounds on the deep; nor the traveller as he comes from the desert.

I GROPE for Selma. I stumble on a ruin. Without any form
is

is the heap. The heath and the rank grass grow about its stones ; and the lonely thistle shakes here, in the midnight breeze, its head. I feel it heavy with the drops of night.—The owl flutters around my gray hairs : she awakes the roe from his bed of moss. He bounds lightly, without fear ; for he sees it is but the aged Ossian. —Roe of mossy Selma, thy death is not in the thought of the bard. Thou hast started from the bed where often slept Fingal and Oscar, and dost thou think Ossian will stain it with his spear ? No ; roe of the bed of Fingal and Oscar, thy death is not in the thought of the bard.—I only stretch my hand to the place where hung my father's shield ; where it hung, on high, from the roof of Selma. But the blue bending shell of heaven, O Selma ! is now thy only covering. I seek the broad shield among the ruins : my spear strikes against one of its broken bosses.—It is the boss in which dwelt the voice of war ! Its found is still pleasant to my ear : it awakes the memory of the days that are past ; as when the breath of winds kindles the decaying flame on the heath of hinds. —I feel the heaving of my soul. It grows like the swelling of a flood ; but the burden of age presses it back : retire, ye thoughts of war !—Ye dark-brown years that are past, retire. Retire with your clanging shields, and let the soul of the aged rest. Why should war dwell, any more, in my thoughts, when I have forgot to lift the spear ? Yes, the spear of Temora is now a staff ; never more shall it strike the sounding shield.—But it does strike against a shield : let me feel its shape.—It is like the wasting moon, half-consumed with the rust of years.—It was thy blue shield, O Gaul !—the shield of the companion of my Oscar !—But why this melting of my soul ?—Son of my love ! thou hast

received thy fame. I will retire and give the name of Gaul to the song.—Harp of Selma, where art thou? And where art thou, Malvina? Thou wilt hear with joy of the companion * of thy Oscar.

THE night was stormy and dark: ghosts shrieked on the heath: torrents roared from the rock of the hill: thunders rolled, like breaking rocks, through clouds; and lightnings travelled on their dark-red wings through the sky.—On that night, our heroes gathered in Selma's halls; the halls that are now an heap! the oak blazed in the midst. Their faces shone in its light, joyful between their dark locks; and the *shell* went round, with its sparkling joy †. The bards sung, and the soft hand of virgins trembled on the string of the harp.

THE night flew on the wings of gladness. We thought the stars had scarce measured half their way, when gray morning arose, from the troubled clouds of her repose in the east. The shield of Fin-

gal

* The disparity of age between Gaul and Oscar was considerable. Yet the similarity of their characters might naturally attach them to each other. The original word, however, which is rendered *companion*, is obsolete, and may only import that they went *hand in hand* to battle. I insert so much of the passage as may enable those who understand the language to judge of the meaning of the expression.

Sa choppain eigheach nam blar!
Is far-aobhinn team fathasd t fhuaim;
Tha e dusga' nam laidh chuaidh seach:
'Sa dh'aindeoin aois, tha manam a 'leinnich.
—Ach uam fhuainte nam blar,
'S mo fhléagh air fas na luirg;
An sgia' choppach tuille cha bhuaill i;
Ach ciod fo'n fhuasim a dhuing i?

Bleidh sgeith air a caithe le haois!
Mar ghealach ear-dhu' a cruth.
Sgia' Ghuill si a t'ann
Sgia' cho'lain mo dheagh Oscar!

† There are several opinions with regard to the liquor used in these *seasts of souls*. The most probable is, that it was made of a juice extracted from the birch-tree, and fermented. This would be more palatable than that which it is said they made of a certain kind of heath, and more suited to their exigencies than any spoils of wine which they might, at times, carry away from the Roman province. Or they might possibly have malt-liquors from other parts of the island before they themselves paid any attention to agriculture.

gal was struck. This bōs ‡ had then another found. The heroes heard its voice, like thunder on the distant heath; and they rushed with joy from all their streams. Gaul heard it; but the water of Strumon rolled its flood, and who could cross its mighty tide?

WE failed to Ifrona: we fought; and recovered the spoil of our land. Why didst thou not wait at thy mossy stream till we returned, thou lifter of the blue shield! Why, son of Morni, was thy soul so impatient for the battle?—But thou wouldest not lose thy share in any field of fame. Gaul prepared his ship, light rider of the foamy wave, and spread his sails to the first ray that streaked the clouds of the east. He followed to Ifrona the path of the king.

BUT who is that on the sea-beat rock, sad as the gray mist of the morning? Her dark hair floats, careleſs, on the stream of winds; her white hand is around it, like the foam of floods. Two dewy drops start into her eyes as they are fixed on the ship of Gaul; and on her breast hangs, in the midst of his smiles, her child. She hums in his ear a song. Sighing, she stops short. She has forgot what it was. Thy thoughts, Evirchoma, are not of the song: they fail, along with thy love, on the deep. The lessened ship is half in view. A low-sailing cloud now spreads its skirt between, and hides it like a dark rock in the passing mist. “Safe be thy course, rider of the foamy deep; when, my love, shall I again behold thee!”

‡ The bōs of Fingal's shield, found just now in the ruins of his palace. The *Beim-sgeithe*, or “striking the shield,” was the usual mode of giving the alarm or challenge to battle among the Caledonians.

Evirchoma * returns to Strumon's halls ; but her steps are slow, and her face is sad. She is like a lonely ghost in a calm, when he walks in the mist of the pool, and the wind of hills is silent. Often she looks back, in the midst of her sighs, and turns her tearful eye towards Ocean. "Safe be thy course, rider of the foamy deep ; when shall I again behold thee !"

NIGHT with all her murky darkness met the son of Morni in the midst of his course. The dim moon hid herself in the caves of clouds, and no star looked out from the windows of the sky. His bark in silence rides the deep : and, in our course, we miss the chief, as homeward we bound to Morven.

IFRONA hides itself in the morning mist. The step of Gaul is careless on its shore : he wonders he does not hear the roar of battle. He strikes his shield, that his friends may know of his coming. "Does Fingal," he says, "sleep ; and the battle unfought ? Heroes of Morven, are you here ?"

O THAT we had ! Then had this spear defended thee from the foe ; or low had its owner fallen. No harmless staff, the prop of tottering years, was then Temora's spear. It was the lightning that overturns the lofty trees in its red-winged course, when the mountains tremble before it. Ossian was then no blasted tree that stands alone on the heath, shaking before every breeze, and half-bent over the stream by wintry storms. No ; I stood like the pine of Cona, with all my green branches about me, smiling at the storm of heaven, and tossing themselves with joy in the roar of winds.

* *Aoibhir-chaonha*, "mild and stately," 3d book of Temora, and some other of Ossian's poems. the wife of Gaul, and daughter of *Caedlu-tonglas*. Mention is made of her in the

† "Fil-

winds. O that I had been nigh the chief of Strumon, when blew the storm of Ifrona!

WHERE, then, ye ghosts of Morven, were you? Were you asleep in your airy caves, the dark-gray chambers of the clouds, or sporting with the withered leaf, the play of whistling boys, when you did not warn your sons of the danger of Gaul?—But you did warn us, friendly spirits of our fathers! Twice you drove back our fails to Ifrona's shore, as you sent your terrible roar along the deep. But we did not understand the sign. We thought you had been the ghosts of foes, that meant to oppose our return.—The king drove his blade through the gray folds of their robe, as over his head they passed. “Pursue,” he said, “the thistles beard in other lands; or sport, where you can, with the sons of the feeble.”

MOURNFUL they flew upon their blast. Their sound was like mountain-sighs on dark streams, when cranes foretel the storm. Some thought they half-heard from them the name of Gaul.

* * * * *

“AM I alone in the midst of thousands? Is there no sword to shine, with mine, in the darkness of battle?—The breeze blows towards Morven. Thither is the course of white-headed billows. Shall Gaul lift his fails? His friends are not with him. What shall Fingal say, who bade his sons to mark the path of Gaul in battle †? What shall the bards say if they see a cloud on the fame of the son of Morni? Morni! my father! wouldst thou not blush if thy son retired? Yes, with thy white hairs, thou wouldst hide thy face in the presence of the heroes of other times, and sigh in the wind above the vale of

Stru-

† “Fillan and Oscar, of the dark-brown hair! fair Ryno, with the pointed steel! hold the son of Morni. Let your swords be like his in the strife, and behold the advance with valour to the fight, and behold the deeds of his hands.” Fingal, B. 4.

Strumon. The ghosts of the feeble would behold thee and say, ‘ There the father of him who once fled in Ifrona.’ No; thy son will not fly, O Morni! his foul is a beam of fire; it catches in its red flame the groves. If wide they spread their wings, as wide it spreads its rage.—Morni, come in thy mountain cloud, and behold thy son. Thy soul was a crowded stream that swelled and foamed, when rocks in the narrow path opposed its course; the same shall be the soul of Gaul.—Evirchoma! Ogal!—But lovely beams mix not with the tempest of heaven: they wait till the storm is over. The thoughts of Gaul must now be of battle. All other thoughts away.—O that thou wert with me, Ossian, as in the strife of Lathmon!—But my soul is a spirit of the storm. Dark-eddying it rushes, alone, through the troubled deep. It heaves a thousand billows over trembling isles; then careless rides upon the car of winds.”

THE shield of Morni is struck again in Ifrona *. No half-consumed, earth-crustèd board was this orb then! Ifrona rocked with its sound, and its thousands gathered around Gaul. But the sword of Morni is in the terrible hand of the chief; and, like the green branches of the forest, their ranks are hewn before him. Their

blue

* The conduct of Gaul on this occasion may be censured as rash, in drawing upon himself a whole host when he was alone. But as he had before struck his shield, in hopes his friends had been near him, it is probable that he could not well decline an engagement to which himself had founded the alarm.—It may further be observed, that the behaviour of Gaul on this occasion corresponds very much with his character in the poem of

Lathmon, and indeed with the manners of the times, which made it disgraceful for a hero to retire on any pretext whatever. The conduct of Oscar in the *War of Caros* affords a remarkable instance of this. The great resemblance betwixt Celtic manners and the laws of chivalry in later times, makes it probable, that the first had suggested most of those ideas on which the latter were founded.

† In

blue arms are strewed upon the heath, and the birds of death are hovering round.

Thou hast seen, Malvina, a mighty wave recoiling, white, from the broad side of a whale, when her path is in the foamy deep. Thou hast seen, on the top of that wave, a flock of hungry sea-fowl gathered about the whale which they dare not approach; tho' they see her float, half-dead, on ocean's stream, with her white belly turned above like sails: so stood the sons of Ifrona, afraid; and kept at bay by the sword of Gaul.

BUT the strength of the chief of Strumon begins to fail. He leans to the side of a tree. His blood marks, with wandering streams, his blue shield, and a hundred arrows with their heads of steel have torn his side. Still, however, he holds his sword, a meteor of death, in his hand, and the foes are afraid.

BUT sons of Ifrona! what means that stone which you try to lift? Is it to mark to future times your fame †? Ah! no; the thoughts of your soul are hard as steel. Scarce can seven hurl the rock from the hill: it rolls its course against the thigh of Gaul.—The chief sinks upon his knee; but over his broad, brazen shield, he still looks terrible. His foes are afraid to come nigh. They leave him to pine away in death, like an eagle that lies upon a rock, when the bolt of heaven hath broke its wings.

O THAT we had known in Selma that such, whirlwind of battle! was thy fate. Then had we not listened to the songs of virgins, nor to the voice of harps and bards. The spear of Fingal had not slept so quiet by the wall; nor the son of Luno rested in his

† In ancient times, pillars of stone were frequently erected in the field of battle to commemorate the victory.

his sheath. Then had we not wondered, that night, to see the king half-rising from the feast, and looking to his shield. "I thought," he said, "the light spear of a ghost had touched its boss; but it was only the passing breeze."

GHOST of Morni! why didst thou not strike it louder again; or pour thy knowledge on the dream of our rest? Why didst thou not come to Ossian, and say, "Awake, be thy path again on the wave of the deep."—But thou hadst been flying in haste to Ifrona, to mourn over the fall of thy son.

MORNING arose on Strumon. Evirchoma awoke from her troubled dreams. She heard the sound of the chace on Morven, and wondered no voice of Gaul was there. She listens; but the rock does not echo to his cry. The groves of Strumon hear only the sighs of the fair.

EVENING comes; but no dark ship is seen, light-bounding over the deep. The soul of Evirchoma is mournful.

"WHAT detains my hero in the isle of Ifrona? Why, my love, art thou not returned with Morven's chiefs? Thou hast perhaps missed them on the deep. But yet thou mightest have ere now returned. How long shall thy Evirchoma bend from the rock of waves? How long shall the tear wander, like a stream in mist, upon her cheek?—Is the child of our love forgot? If not, where are the wonted smiles of his father? The tears of Ogal * descend with mine; and his sighs to mine reply. O that his father heard him,

as,

* *Ogal*, "young Gaul." In those times men did not receive their proper names till they had distinguished themselves by some renowned action, or discovered some peculiar characteristic in their person or behaviour. This, like all the other

customs of the ancient Caledonians, had a happy tendency to inspire their youth with the love of virtue and bravery; the only avenue to that immortality of fame of which they were always so ambitious.

as, lisping, he half-repeats his name; then quick would be the steps of his return to relieve him. But ah me! I remember my dream through night; and I fear the day of thy return, O Gaul, is over.

“THE sons of Morven, methought, pursued the chase; but absent was the chief of Strumon. At a distance I saw him reclined on his spear; on one foot only leaned the chief. The other seemed a column of gray mist. It varied its form to every breeze. I approached my love; but a blast from the desert came. He vanished.—But dreams are the children of fear. Chief of Strumon, I shall again behold thee. Thou wilt lift thy fair head before me, like the beam of the east, when he looks on Cromla’s † haunted heath, where shook all night, amidst the terror of ghosts, the weary traveller. The spirits of the dark retire on their deep-rustling blast; and he, glad, takes his staff, and pursues the rest of his journey.

“Yes, my love, I shall behold thee. Is not that thy ship that climbs the distant wave: its sails are like the foam of the rock; like a tree that waves its top in snow? Is it thy ship; or is it a cloud of mist that deceives, through the darkening shades, my tearful eye?—Still it appears like the ship of my love.—Yes, dark-bounder on the rolling deep, it is thou.—Dusky night, hide not from my view his sails. Thou beginnest to hide them under thy raven wings: but I will bound, in this skiff, on the darkly-rolling deep; and meet in the folds of night my love.”

X

SHE

† *Crom-flia*, “bending hill,” or “the hill of bending.” It was probably a Druidical place of worship, which might affix to it the ideas of awe and terror here ascribed to it.

* This

SHE went †; but no ship meets her on the deep. It was but a cloud low-failing on its wave; the bark of some mariner's ghost, pursuing the sport of his former days.

THE skiff of Evirchoma flies before the wind. Ifrona's bay receives it through night, where lonely waves roll themselves beneath the gloom of hanging woods. The thin moon glides from cloud to cloud. Its course, through trees, is on the edge of the hill. The stars, at times, glance through their parted mist, and hide themselves again under their vapoury veil. With the faint light, Evirchoma beholds the beauty of her child. “ Thou art lovely in the dreams of thy rest.”—Over him she bends a while in sighs; and then leaves him in the womb of her skiff. “ Rest in peace, my child; I seek thy father along this winding beach.”

THRICE she leaves him, and thrice she quick returns. She is like the dove that leaves in the cleft of Ulla's rock her young, when she wanders, over the plain, in search of food. She sees the dark berry on the heath below her; but the thought of the hawk comes across her soul, and she oft returns to behold her young, before she tastes it.—Thus the soul of Evirchoma is divided, like a wave which the rock and the wind tos, by turns, between them.—“ But what voice is that from the breast of the breeze? it comes from the tree of the lonely shore.”

“ SAD,” it says, “ I pine here alone; what avails that my arm was so strong in battle? Why does not Fingal, why does not Ossian, know,

† This expedition of Evirchoma will not appear unnatural or extravagant, if we consider, that, in those days, the women frequently bore a part in the most arduous undertakings both by sea and

land. Besides, she might not probably intend to go far from the shore at her first setting out, as she thought she had seen the ship of Gaul at no great distance.

* What

know, that I am thus low on the shore of night? Ye lights above, that at times behold me, tell it in Selma, by your red signs, when the heroes come forth from the feast to behold your beauty. Ye ghosts that glide on nightly beams, if through Morven be your eddying course, tell, as you pass, the tale in the ear of the king. Tell him, that here I pour out my soul; that cold in Ifrona is my dwelling; that two days have brought me no food, and that my drink is the briny wave.—But tell not this in Strumon; let not your knowledge come to the dreams of Evirchoma. Be the rustling of your blasts far from her halls: shake not roughly your wings, as, even at a distance, you pass. My love might hear it; and some dark-boding thought might travel, as mist, across her soul. Be therefore your course, ye spirits of night, far off; and let the dreams of my love be pleasant.—The morning, Evirchoma, is yet distant. Sleep on, with thy lovely child in thy arms, and pleasant be thy dreams in the murmur of Strumon! Pleasant, in the valley of roes, be thy dreams, O Evirchoma! let no thought of Gaul disturb thee. His pains are forgot, when the dreams of his love are pleasant.”

“ AND dost thou think thy love could sleep, and her Gaul in pain? Dost thou think the dreams of Evirchoma could be pleasant, while thou wert absent? No; my heart is not unfeeling as that rock; nor did I receive my birth in Ifrona’s land*.—But how

X 2

shall

* What this Ifrona was, is uncertain; but it seems to have been remarkable for the cruelty of its inhabitants. In the following lines of a fragment concerning the death of Clonar, who had been slain there, many properties of the *Celtic hell* are ascribed to it; from which, and the

similarity of the names, it is probable it might have been considered as a type of it.

I sin alluidh na Freoine,
Le d' thugh-echo buan, 's led' ua' bheistan;
A thir nam pian! gun mhiadh gun bhaigh;
Dol a d' dhalib fud mo dheisinn.

“ Ifrona,

shall I relieve thee, Gaul; or where shall Evirchoma find food in the land of foes?—I remember the tale of Casdu-conglas.

“ WHEN I was young, in my father’s arms, his course was one night on the deep with Crifollis, beam of love. The storm drove us on a rock. Three gray trees dwelt lonely there, and shook in the troubled air their leaf-less heads. At their mossy root a few red berries crept. These Casdu-conglas pulled. He pulled them, but he tasted not. Thou needest them, he said, Crifollis; and, to-morrow, the deer of his own mountain will supply Casdu-conglas.—The morning came; the evening returned: but the rock is still their dwelling.—My father wove a bark of the branches of the gray trees *; but his soul is feeble for want of food. ‘ Crifollis,’ he said, ‘ I sleep. When the calm shall come, be thou gone with thy child to Idronlo; the hour of my waking is distant.’—Never shall the hills of I-dronlo behold me,’ she replied, ‘ without my love. O why didst thou not tell me thy soul had failed! both might have been sustained by the mountain-berries. But the breasts of Crifollis will

sup-

“ Ifrona, horrible isle! covered with thick and ever-during mist: thou noisome abode of wild and venomous beasts: thou land of pain, where fame and friendship are strangers.—I tremble to go near thee.”

As the name of *Glen-Freoin* is still retained by a valley in the neighbourhood of Clyde, it is probable the scene of this poem was somewhere on that coast, the inhabitants of which were generally at variance with the people of Morven. The situation of many places shew, that anciently, *I*, or *Inis*, did not always signify an island, but sometimes a promontory,

or any place nearly inclosed by the sea: as *Deiginisb*, *Craiginisb*, &c.

* The *Curachs* (or *vimenei alvei* of *Solinus*) which were the first boats of the Caledonians, were made of wicker, and covered again with hides. The name, for some time, seems to have continued, after the construction of their vessels was much improved, as the ancient poems give sometimes the name of *Curach* to vessels of a considerable size. That which brought St Columba and his companions to Iona, was called *Curach*, though near 40 feet long, if we may credit tradition.

supply her love. I feel them full within, and thou, my love, must drink. For my sake thou must live, and not fall here asleep.'—He rose: his strength returned: the wind retired: they reached I-dronlo. Often did my father lead me to Crifollis' tomb, as he told the lovely tale. 'Evirchoma,' he said, 'let thy love to thy spouse be such, when the days of thy youth shall come.' And it is such, O Gaul; these breasts will supply, this night, thy soul. To-morrow we shall be safe on the shore of Strumon.

"LOVELIEST of thy race," said Gaul, "retire thou to Strumon's shore; let no beam of light find thee in Ifrona. Retire in thy skiff with Ogal: why should he fall like a tender flower, which the warrior, unfeeling, lops off with the end of his spear; himself of no son the father. He lops it off, with all its drops of dew; as, careless, he walks along, humming the song of the cruel. Retire, and leave me in Ifrona; for my strength, like the stream of summer, is failed: I wither like the green herb before the blast of winter. No friendly beam of the sun, no returning spring shall revive me.—Bid the warriors of Morven bring me to their land: but no, the light of my fame is clouded. Let them only raise my tomb beneath this tall tree. The stranger will see it as he looks around him from his watery course. Sighing, he will shake his head, and say, There is all that remains of the mighty!"

"AND here too shall be all that remains of the fair; for I will sleep in the same tomb with my love. Our narrow bed shall be the same in death; our ghosts in the folds of the same gray cloud shall be joined. The virgins of Morven will mark, through moon-beams, our steps, and say, 'Behold, they are lovely.' Yes, traveller of the

watery

watery way, drop the double tear; for here, with her beloved Gaul, is the slumbering Evirchoma.

“ BUT ah! what voice is that in the breeze? The cries of Ogal pour, helpless, in my ear. They awake my sleeping soul. Yes; my soul rolls restless within, and tossest from side to side in its uneasy bed. And why heaves thus the soul of Gaul; why bursts that sigh from the warrior’s breast? Feel thus the hearts of fathers for their sons; have they, at times, the soul of a mother? Yes, for I feel the stirrings of thine: let me bear thee to the skiff where our child was left. Come, the burden of my love will be light: Evirchoma will be strong when her Gaul is in danger.—Give me that spear, it will support on the shore my steps.”

SHE bore him to her skiff. She struggled all night with the wave. The parting stars beheld the decay of her strength: the morning light beheld it fail, as the mist that melts in the beam of heat *.

I SLEPT, that night, on the hunter’s heath. Morni, with all his gray, parted locks, rose in my dreams. Above me he leaned on his trembling staff. His face of age was sad; it was marked with the course of the tear. The stream wandered, here and there, on his cheek. The deep furrows, which time had worn, were full. Thrice looked the red eye of the aged over the deep; and thrice aroſe his sigh. “ Is this,” he faintly faid, “ a time for the friend of Gaul to sleep?”—A blast comes, rustling, along the bended trees. Its noise awakes the cock of the heath. At the root of his dark-

brown

* In the most common editions of *Tiom-na’Ghuill* a long dialogue is foisted in here, which is rejected as spurious, or belonging to some other Gaul whose wife was called *Aina*. It begins with

A Righbhlin is binne ceol
Gluais gu malda, 's na gabh bron, &c.

brown bush, he lifts his head from beneath his wing ; and, trembling, raises the mournful, plaintive voice.—I started at the cry from my dream. I saw Morni rolled away, a gray cloud, in the fold of the blast. I pursued the path which he marked on the sea. I found on the blue face of the wave, sheltered by a desert isle, the skiff. On the dark side of it leaned the head of Gaul. Under his elbow rested the shield of battle. Over its edge half-looked the wound, and poured the red-stream around its bos. I lifted the helmet from his face. His yellow locks, folded in sweat, were wandering on his brow. At the burst of my grief he tried to raise his eye ; but it was heavy. Death came, like night on the eye of the sun, and covered it with all its darkness.—Never more, O Gaul, shalt thou behold the father of thy Oscar.

BESIDE the son of Morni is the decayed beauty of Evirchoma. Her child smiles, careless, in her arms ; and plays with the head of the spear. Her words were few : her voice was feeble. I gave her my hand to raise her up. She laid it on the head of Ogal, as, sighing, she pierc'd with her look my melting soul.—No more shall Evirchoma rise ! Sweet helpless child, thou needest no longer cling to the breast of thy mother. Ossian shall be thy father : but Evirallin is not ; and who shall supply the place of Evirchoma ! —But I feel the meltings of my soul return.—Why should Ossian remember all the griefs that are past ? Their memory is mournfully-pleasant ; but his tears would fail.

WE came to Strumon's mossy streams. Silence dwelt around their banks. No column of smoke, blue-curling, rises from the hall. No voice of songs is there ; no soft trembling sound of the harp. The breeze rushes, whistling, through its open porch ; and lifts

lifts the dry, rustling leaf, upon its eddying wing. The perching eagle sits already on its lofty top, and marks it out as the place of her repose. "Here," she seems to say, "I may safely build my nest; for who can climb its height, to make my brown sons afraid?"—The dun little son of the roe beholds her, as, wandering below, he looks up to what he thinks a gray rock.—He beholds her, and is afraid. He hides himself under a broad shield, near the gate of the house.—Stretched across the threshold, swift Cos-ula lies. He hears a rustling near. He thinks it may be the tread of Gaul. In his joy he starts up, and shakes from his dim eye the tear. But when he sees it is only the son of the roe, he turns his mournful face away. He lies again on his cold stone, and the song of his grief is dismal.

BUT who can tell the sadness of Morven's heroes? They come in silence, each from his own winding vale; slowly moving, like the dark shadow of mist on the brown rushy plain, when the wind is scarce awake on the hill. They see the bulwark of the battle low; and their bursting tears, like the ooze of rocks, descend. Fingal leaned to a blasted pine, that was overturned at the head of Gaul. His gray locks, as he bends, half-hide his tears; but in his white beard they meet the whistling wind.

"AND art thou fallen," at length he said; "art thou fallen, first of my heroes! when my strength has failed? Shall I hear thy voice no more in my halls, nor the sound of thy shield in my battles? Shall thy sword no more lighten the dark path of my danger; nor thy spear scatter whole hosts of my enemies? Shall thy dark ship ride no more the storm, while thy joyful rowers pour before them the song on the watery mountains? Shall the children of Morven

no more awake my soul from its thought, as they cry, ‘ Behold the ship of Gaul !’ Shall the harps of virgins, and the voice of bards, no more be heard when thou art coming ?—I see not the red-streaming of thy banners on the heath ; the tread of thy foot is not there ; nor the sound of thy unmisgiving arrow. The bounding of thy dogs is not on the hill ; they mournfully howl in the door of thy empty house. The deer grazes on the plain before them : but they weep on ; they do not heed him ; for they see not Gaul returning.—Alas ! sons of the chase, the day of his return is past. His glad voice shall call you no more, in the morning, to pursue the steps of roes through rocky mountains. Here, forgetful of the chase, he rests ; nor can even the sound of Morven’s shield, O Gaul, awake thee !

“ STRENGTH of the warrior, what art thou ! To-day, thou rollest the battle, a cloud of dust, before thee ; and the dead strew thy path, as the withered leaves mark the course of a ghost of night. —To-morrow, the short dream of thy valour is over ; the terror of thousands is vanished. The beetle, on his dusky wing, hums the song of triumph over the mighty ; and, unmolested, offends him.—

“ WINY, son of the feeble, didst thou wish for the strength of the chief of Strumon, when thou didst behold him brightening in the course of his steel, as brightens a pillar of ice in the midst of sun-beams ? Didst thou not know that the strength of the warrior soon fails, as melts in the beam that ice which thou hast been viewing ? Its date is short ; like the bright cloud that glitters to the ray of the evening. The hunter sees it from his rock, as he hies him home, and admires the rain-bow form of its

beauty. But a few moments, on their eagle-pinion, pass ; the sun shuts his eye of light ; the blast whirls that way his rustling course, and a dark mist is all that remains of the gay form.—It is all, O Gaul ! that now remains of thee.—But thy memory, chief of Fingal's heroes, shall remain. No cloud of mist that shall pass away, on its own gray wings is thy fame.

“ RAISE †, ye bards, his tomb ; with that of the sun-beam of his love, Evirchoma. This gray stone shall mark to the traveller the place of his repose ; and that tall oak shall shade it from the noon-day heat. The passing breeze shall bid its boughs be early green, and long preserve their beauty. Its leaves shall shoot out their head, through the shower of the spring, while other trees are still bare, and the heath around them blasted. The birds of summer, from their distant land, shall first perch on Strumon's oak ; from afar they shall behold its green beauty. The ghost of Gaul will hear, in his cloud, their song ; and the virgins of the race to come will praise Evirchoma. The memory of you two, while these monuments remain, shall travel through future years together.—Then, when thou, O stone, shalt crumble into dust ; and thou, O tree,

moul-

† This paragraph loses much of the artless simplicity of the original, as it could not be rendered with perspicuity without paraphrasing some of its images. The original passage is here annexed, that such as choose to do it may have it in their power to compare it with the translation.

Cairibh, a chlanna nan teud,
Leaba Ghuill, 's a dheo-greine la' ris ;
Far an comh'raichead a leab' ann cein.
Ged' raibh geagan ard ga sgaille'
Fui' sgéi' na daraig is guirme bla',
Is luanthe fas, 's is buaine dreach ;
A thruchdas a duilleach air amail na frois,

'S an raon man cuairt di seargte.
A duilleach, o iomal na tie,
Chitear le eoin an t samhruidh ;
Is luidhidh gach eun mar a thig
Air barra' geige na Strumoin.
Cluinnidh Goll an eclair na cheo,
'S oighean a' seinn air Aoibhir-chaomha.
'S gus an caochail gach ni dhiu so
Cha sgarar ar cuimhne o' cheile.
—Gus an erion gu luanthe a chluich,
'S an searg as le h aois a gheug so,
Gus an sguir na strubain a muth
'S an dea' mathair-visge nan sleibhte ;
Gus an caillear ann dilinn aois
Gach filidh 's dan is aobhar sgéil,
Cho'n theoruich an t Aineal “ Co mac Morna ;
No c'ait an co'nuidh' Ri' na Strumoin ? ”

moulder with age away ; when thou, mighty stream, shalt cease to run, and the mountain-spring shall, no more, supply thy course ; when your songs, O bards, in the dark flood of Time shall be lost ; and the memory of yourselves, with those you sung, in its vast current be swept away and forgot :—Then, perhaps, may cease to be heard the fame of Gaul ; and the stranger may ask, “ Who was Morni’s son, and who was Strumion’s chief ? ”

D U T H O N A :

A P O E M *.

THE ARGUMENT.

FINGAL, pursuing Dorla who had carried off the spoils of Selma in his absence, lands in the night in Duthona, the island of his friend Conar. His landing is observed and opposed by Dorla, who had also called here and subdued Conar. Fingal thinking he had been opposed by his friends, was satisfied with making them retreat a little, till day-light should shew them their mistake. But learning how matters stood from Conar, who is accidentally discovered in a cave where he had been confined by Dorla, spies are sent to watch the motions of the enemy.—Next morning Fingal and the remains of Conar's people engage with Dorla, who falls in battle.—Miula the daughter of Conar, who had been found concealed in the habit of a young bard, is unexpectedly restored to her father, who gives her in marriage to one of Fingal's heroes.

WHY dost thou roar so loud, O sea, on Morven's rocky coast; and why, O wind of the south, dost thou pour thy strength against the shore of my echoing hills? Is it to detain my fails from the land of the foe, and stop my growing fame?—But, ocean, thy billows roar in vain; and thou, wind of the south, mayest blow; but you cannot detain the fails of Fingal, from the land of the distant Dorla. The roar of your strength shall soon decay;

* *Du'-thonna*, “the isle of dark waves.” This poem, from one of the incidents mentioned in it, is often called *Dan O' Mara*, or “The song of the maid on the shore.” The versification in several places is broken, and only supplied from the traditional tale which accompanies the

poem. A few lines in the beginning are omitted, and the translation begins with the following stanza:

Is garbh leam beucach do thonn,
A mhuir cheann-ghlas, ri bonn mo shleibh;
Is ofnaiche att'ar, citi', a deas,
Chon e mo leas gu do' shield sibh, &c.

decay; and the blue face of my feas shall be calm behind, when you retire to rest in the green groves of the desart.—Yes, thy strength, O wind, shall fail; but the fame of Fingal shall remain: my renown shall be heard in the land that is distant.

THE king spoke, and his heroes gathered around. The bushy hair of Dumolach sings in the wind. Leth bends over his shield of brafs; it is marked with many a scar. Morlo toffes in air his glittering spear; and the joy of battle is in the eye of Gormallon.

WE rush through ocean's surgy foam. Whales, trembling, fly before us on the deep. Isles see us, and fly out of our way; they hide themselves behind the path of our ship. Duthona lifts its head like a rock of ooze, which the distant wave seems, at times, to intercept. “It is the land of Conar,” said Fingal; “the land of the friend of my people!”

NIGHT descends on the fable deep. The mariner cries, It is dark. He wanders from his course: he looks in vain for the guiding star.—He half-sees it, through the torn skirt of a showery cloud: with joy he bids his companions behold it. They look up; but the window of the cloud is shut, and the light is again concealed.—The steps of the night, on the deep, are dark. Let our course be to the shore till morning arise with her yellow locks in the east; till dark waves clothe themselves in light, and mountains lift their green heads in day.

OUR course is to Duthona's bay.—But see that dim ghost on the rock! He is tall as the gray pine to which he leans. His shield is a broad cloud. Behind it rolls in darkness the rising moon. That column of dark-blue mist, studded above with a red star, is his spear; and that meteor that gleams on the heath, his sword. Winds,

in their eddies, lift at times, like smoke, his hair. These flames, in two caves below it, are his eyes.—Often had Fingal seen the sign of battle; but who could believe it in the land of Conar, his friend?

THE king ascends the rock. The blade of Luno waves a meteor of light in his hand, and Carril walks behind him. The spirit beholds the warrior approach: on the wings of his blast he flies. Fingal pursues him with his voice: the hills of Duthona hear the sound. They shake with all their gray rocks and groves. From their dreams of danger, the people start along the heath, and kindle the alarm of the flame.

ARISE, my warriors, said the returning king, with a sigh; arise, let each gird on his mail, and spread his broad shield before him. We must fight; but not with the wonted joy of our strength when the roar of the battle rose. Our friends meet us through night; and Fingal will not tell his name*. Our foes might hear it, and say, “The warriors of Morven were once afraid.” No; let each gird on his mail, and spread the shield: but let the spear err of its mark, and the arrow fly to the wind. With morning light we shall be seen of our friends, and our joy shall be great in Duthona.

WE

* In those days of heroism it was reckoned cowardice to tell one's name to an enemy, lest it should be considered as claiming kindred with him and declining the combat. The same extravagant notions of honour seem to have prevailed among some other nations of antiquity. In the Argonautic expedition, Jason, after having been hospitably entertained by Cyzicus king of the Deliones, was driven back

on his coast, through night, and he and his people taken for Pelasgians, with whom they were then at war. Rather than dispense with this punctilio of honour, Jason fought till day-light shewed his friends their mistake, after a great many of them, with their king, had been killed. *Vid. Ancient Univ. Hist. of Fab. and Heroic Times, § 6.*

WE met, in our rattling steel, the darkly-moving host. Their arrows fell, like a shower of hail, on our shields; but we fought not the fall of our friends. They gathered about us, like the sea about a rock. The king saw that his people must fight or fall. He came from his hill in the awful stride of his strength, like a ghost that hath clothed himself in storms. The moon raised her head above the hill, and beamed on the shining blade of Luno. It glittered in the hand of the king, like a pillar of ice in the fall of Lora, when the sun is bright in the midst of his journey. Duthona saw its blaze, but could not bear its light. They retired, like darkness when it sees the steps of the morning, and sunk in a wood that rose behind.

SLOW-MOVING like Lubar, when he repeats in Dura's plain his course, we came to a hollow stream that ran before us on the heath. Its bed is between two banks of ferns, amidst many an aged birch. There we talked of the storms of battle and the actions of former heroes. Carril sung of the times of old: Ossian praised the deeds of Conar; nor did his harp forget the mild beauty of Minla.

THE voice of the song ceased. The breeze whistled along the gurgling stream. It bore to our ear the sound of grief. It was soft as the voice of ghosts in the bosom of groves, when they travel over the tombs of the dead.

Go, Ossian, said the king, and search the banks of the stream; some one of our friends lies there, on his dark shield, overturned like a tree in the strife of night. Bring him to Fingal, that he may apply the herbs of the mountain; lest any cloud should darken our joy in the land of Duthona.

I WENT, and listened to the song of wo ; my tears flowed, in silence, over the stream.

“ FORLORN and dark is my dwelling in the storm of night *. No friendly voice is heard, save the cry of the owl from the cleft of her rock. No bard is nigh in my lonely cave, to deceive the tedious night.—But night and day are the same to me ; no beam of the sun travels here in my darkly dwelling. I see not his yellow hair in the east ; nor, in the west, the red beam of his parting. I see not the moon, failing through pale clouds, in her brightness ; nor trembling, through trees, on the blue face of the stream. No warm beam from either visits the cave of Conar. O that I had fallen in the strife of Dorla ; that the tomb had received my Minla ! Then had the fame of Duthona passed away, like autumn’s silent beam, when it moves over the brown fields between the shadows of mist. The children under Duthrona’s oak feel it warm, and bless the beam. It is over ; they bend their bows, and forget it.—Forget me also, children of my people, if Dorla does not meet you, like the blasting wind of the frost, when the rose-buds of the wood are tender. O that I had met death before you ; when I strode with Fingal before the strength of Swaran ! Then my tomb might rise before the king, and my fame be sung by the voice of Ossian. The bards of the distant years, sitting around the winter-flame, would say, when the feast was over, ‘ Listen to the song of Conar.’—But now my fame shall not be heard ; my tomb shall not be known. The stranger stumbles on a gray stone in Duthona. Its head is covered with the rank, whistling grafts. He turns it away

Z

with

* This song of Cenar has in the original an air of melancholy extremely suitable to the occasion of it.

Is doracha ‘fan doirinn mo cho’nuidh !
Gus gluibh am choir ach ian tiamhaidh ;
Threig am Bard :—tha’n oidhche mall ;
O’s oidhche gach la dhamhsa, &c.

with the end of his spear. He perceives the mouldering tomb. ‘ Who sleeps,’ he asks, ‘ in this narrow house?’ The children of the vale reply, ‘ We know not; the song doth not record his name.’

—BUT it shall record thy name, O Conar! thou shalt not be forgotten by the voice of Cona. Come, leave thy cave, and lift again the spear of battle. The foe shall wither, like the frosted fern, before thee; and thy fame shall flourish, as the green oak of Duthona, when it lifts its tall head above the mist of the vale, and spreads its glittering leaf to the shower of the sun.

“ FRIENDLY is thy voice, son of night; for ghosts affright not me. No; their voice is pleasant to forsaken Conar. O let thy converse be oft in my cave! our words shall be of the narrow house, and of the airy dwellings of heroes. Of other worlds we shall speak: but of my friends, of my fame, we shall be silent.—My fame is departed like the melting of mists on Mora, when the sun is high, and the clouds retire to the desart. My friends, too, are distant: between their peaceful shields they sleep, and no dream of me disturbs them. And let them sleep; spirit of the friendly soul, my dwelling shall soon be with thee in the peaceful abode of thy rest. Together we shall visit the children of grief in their nightly cave, and make them forget their pain in their dreams*. We will wander with their souls through fields of fame; and bid the mighty shak in their presence. Their thong shall be a robe: their cave the noble Selma. The wind in their ear shall be the music of harps, and the whistling grafts the song of virgins. Till then be thy

* The bard, it would appear from this passage, was of opinion, that dreams were sometimes occasioned by the agency of de- parted spirits, who had the power of im- pressing the mind with sensations of either the pleasing or painful kind.

thy visits to Conar frequent; for thy voice to me is pleasant, air-borne son of the night."

I cut the thongs from the hand of the chief, and brought him to the king. Their faces brightened with joy between their gray locks, when they met; for they remembered their early days: The days, when first they drew the string in the mossy vale of streams; when the stag was but the thistle's beard, and the deer the wandering down of the desert. Their years afterwards grew together; and roes, before their swift steps, bounded on Gormal.

BUT who, said Fingal, hath confined the friend of Morven to his cave? Strong must be his arm; and unerring his steel in the strife of battle.

"DORLA heard that my arm had failed; and he came to my halls by night, when my friends were absent. I fought; but his numbers prevailed. Dorla is still in Duthona: Minla is sorrowful in his presence; and my people, through their secret vales, are scattered."

FINGAL heard the words of Conar; and the gathering of his mild brows, like clouds that cover the storm, is terrible. He shakes the aspen spear in his hand, and looks on the sword of Luno. "This is no time," he says, "for rest; when he who spoiled Morven is so nigh. His people too are many; for they met us in the midst of night, when we thought they had been the host of Conar.—Ossian, be thy steps, with Gormallon, along the shore. Dunolach and Leth! to Conar's halls; and if Minla be there, spread before her your dark-broad shields, and defend her. Morlo, be thou on the heath, that our foes may not spread the fail to the wind, before the sun shall light us to battle. And where art thou, Carril of the

song? Be nigh the chief of Duthona with thy harp. Its sound is a beam of light that rises in the midst of storms. The tempest, when it shines, retires; and the darkness flies to the desert."

CARRIL came with his harp. Its sound was soft, as the gliding of ghosts on the bank of Lora; when they hide themselves in the white mist of noon, and their sound is on the gale of the stream.—Move in silence, stream of night, that we may listen to the song of the bard.

" OVER Lara of streams there bends an oak. Below it, one lone thistle lifts, between two mossy stones, its head. It sheds, in the passing stream, its drops of dew. Two ghosts are seen there at noon, when the sun is on the plain, and silence reigns in Morven. One is thy ghost, aged Ural? Thy hair wanders, a whiter mist, over two clouds that form thy darkened eyes.—And who is that in the cloud of snow before thee? Who but that fair huntress of the roe, thy daughter?

" THE youths of Lara were at the chase: they were spreading the feast in the booth of the desert. Colgar saw them; and came to Lara in secret, like the torrent that rushes, sudden, from the hill, when no shower is seen by the funny vale.—' Daughter of Ural, thou must go with Colgar. The thongs must confine thy father. He might strike the shield. The youths might hear its sound in the desert.'

" COLGAR, I love thee not. Leave me here with my father. None is with him. His eyes are dark, and his gray hairs are lonely.

" COLGAR would not hear. The daughter of Ural must go with him; but her steps on the heath are mournful. She moves, sad, like

like the mist of showers, when the sun is dim in his cloud, and the valley of streams is silent. A roe bounds on the heath; he steals below them towards a small stream. His brown sides, at times, appear thro' the green rank ferns.—‘ Colgar, give me that bow; I have learnt to pierce the deer.’—He gave the bow. She drew the string. Colgar fell.—She returned to Lara, and the soul of her father was glad. The evening of his life was like the departure of the sun on the mountain of spring; like the leaf of autumn, when it drops in the silent vale. The days of Morala on the hills were many; in death she rested, in peace, with her father.—Over Lara of streams there bends an oak. Below it are two beds. One, Ural, is thine; and thine, daughter of the bow, is the other beside it*.”

I WENT with Gormallon to the shore. Below its rocks we found a youth. His arm, issuing from the light mail, rested on a broken harp, and the staff of a spear is beside him. The moon, rising like a half shield, looked through the beard of the rock on his bended head. In the midst of his grief it waved from side to side, like a pine in the sigh of winds.

WHO is this, said Gormallon, that dwells lonely in the midst of night? Art thou of the host of Dorla; or from the halls of Conar?

I AM, (replied the youth, trembling as the leaf in the blast, as the grass in the stream of winds,) I am of the bards who lived in Conar’s halls. Dorla heard my song, and spared me. Hereafter I may

* The bards always adapted the subject of their songs to the situation of their hearers. The resemblance between the case of Ural’s daughter and the daughter

of Conar, was what gave rise to this, the happy end of which would give the old man some gleam of comfort.

* Gor-

may remember that he carried the arms from Selma, and spread the battle on the fields of Duthona.

“REMEMBER him thou mayest *; but what canst thou say in his praise? He stole the arms from Selma; and came upon Conar, when his friends were absent. His arm is feeble in danger, but strong when none is to oppose. He is a cloud that rises only in a calm; a dark mist, that never lifts his head from the fen, till the winds of the vale have retired.---But the storm from Morven shall overtake this cloud; Fingal shall scatter his beauty.”

“I REMEMBER the king,” said the youth, “since he was in the halls of Duthona. The voice of Ossian I remember, and the stately warriors of Morven. But Morven is far from Duthona.”---The figh stopt his words, and the bursting of his grief was heard, like the breaking of ice on Lego, or the mountain winds in the cave of Ardven.

“FEEBLE † is thy soul,” said Gormallon; “thou art not of the halls of Conar, nor of the race of his bards. They sung of the deeds of battle. Their souls swelled with the joy of danger, as fwell the white fails of Fingal under the blast of Morven. Thou art of the friends of Dorla.—Go, then, thou feeble arm, and tell him that Morven pursues him. Never more shall he see the deerless hills of his heathy desart.”

GORMALLON, reproach not the youth, said I. The soul of the brave, at times, may fail; but it returns again, like the sun when the storm is over. He smiles from the height of his course, and the clouds are scattered. The green-headed pine waves no

longer

* Gormallon speaks.

† The most of this paragraph, and part of that before and after it, are selected from the traditional tale of the poem. The dialogue is there carried on to a greater length, but appears too frivolous to be translated.

longer its spiry top ; the blue face of the sea is calm ; and the glittering vales, in the midst of sun-beams, rejoice.

I TOOK the youth by the hand. I brought him to Carril of songs, till the strife of battle should be over ; for the light now shone on the arms of Dorla. His people, speechless and pale, behold the strength of Morven and the sword of Conar. They stand in their place like the benighted hunter on Cromla, when the terror of ghosts surrounds him. The cold sweat bedims his eye : his trembling knees forbid his flight ; and down he sinks in the midst of his journey.

DORLA beheld the white eyes of his people, and the big tear hangs forward in his own. The spear of Morven glittered in his hand as he spoke.

“ WHY stand we in pale silence here, like these gray trees around us ? The warriors of Morven are few ; and our numbers may prevail. They may have their fame, but have not we also fought with heroes ? Or, should any think of flight, where is the way to our ships, but through the midst of the foe ?—Let us then rush on in our wrath, that our arms may be strong, and the joy of our friends be great when we return to the streams of Caruth.”

* * * * *

CONAR struck the shield of Duthona. His scattered people heard it. They lift their heads from their secret place, like the streams of the heath of Cona, which in the day of drought hide themselves under the stones of the brook ; but when the warm showers descend, they come forth from their retreat ; and, roaring, rush from every hill.

WE met : we fought ; and Dorla fell by the spear of Conar. The
king

king saw the foe brought low. He came in his mildness, and spoke to the people of fallen Dorla.

“ FINGAL delights not in the fall of his foes, altho’ they make him unsheathe the sword. Return to your land; and come not again to Morven, nor to the sea-beat shore of Duthona. Short is the wintery day of the people that lift the sword against Fingal. A pillar of smoke that comes across the tempest is the life of those who fight with the warriors of Morven. Return; and carry the fallen Dorla to his land, that the white hand of his spouse may rear his tomb, and her tearful eye behold his ghost, in the vapour of mist, on Caruth.—Why didst thou rise so early from thy rest; spouse of the fallen Dorla? What dost thou there, leaning on thy gray rock, with thy locks wandering in the drops of dew. Why travels thy eye on the distant wave; these are not the sails of thy love? Thou feest but the foam that breaks round the sporting whale on the bubbling deep.—Murmuring Caruth hears the sighs of the fair, and its banks learn the name of Dorla. Her two children lean to their mother’s knee. They see the round tear hang on her cheek. They lift their little hand to seize the bright pearl. ‘ Why,’ they say, ‘ does our mother weep; and where slept, last night, our father?’ —So perhaps, Ossian, is thy Everallin now anxious for thee. She leads thy little Oscar to Morven’s brow, that she may view the distant sea. He tosses his bulrush spear before him, and looks stern over the little shield of woven reeds. Think of them, my son, and spare the warrior, who, like the unhappy Dorla, leaves behind him a weeping spouse.—Alas, Dorla, why art thou so early fallen!”

Evirallin! Oscar! ye beams of joy which are now no more! How can Ossian touch the harp or sing of war, when your lovely forms

forms shoot, like falling stars, across his soul? O that I were a companion of your blue course, light-travellers of the mountains on high! When shall our ghosts meet in clouds, and glide in the evening gale, when its dusky wave scarce bends the top of pines on Cona? When shall we lift our unshorn heads in other lands, like stars of night in the heathy desart? O that it were soon! that my bed were made in the down of clouds! What the bed of heath is to the weary hunter of Lona, that is the tomb to the heavy bard. I will sleep. Gray stone, wilt thou and the song preserve then my name? No; the season of thy age, O stone, will come, and thou wilt sink down with me to the place where the weary repose on their lowly bed of earth. The stranger will lean on his spear, and ask for thy place; but the sons of little men will not know it. Light of the song, canst thou shew the stranger the place; canst thou tell where sleeps the gray stone of the bard? No; like me, thou art old; the mist of years hath closed upon thy light. Our memory shall pass away like the tale of Duthona, which already is dim on the soul of the bard.

THE people of Dorla ride in silence over the deep. No song rolls before them on the wave. The bards lean their heads upon their harps. Along the wet strings wander, through tears, their gray hairs. The mariner loses, in the mist of thought, his course. The rower, sighing, stops in the midst of his stroke.—Ah! children of grief, remember your steps are on the deep. The storm and the night are behind you.

WE come to the halls of Conar; but the chief is mournful. The sigh lifts the mail upon his breast. It rises like a wave when it folds the storm in its bosom. The light of his eye travels not in

its wonted brightness through his hall ; it is dim as the winter-fun, when the thunder-shower rides, in its own dark cloud, before it.---None says to the chief, “ Why art thou sad ? ” For, absent is that star of night ; the bright, soft-looking eye of Minla.

FINGAL beheld the darkness of the chief, and covered his own grief under the plume of his helmet. “ Carril,” he softly said, “ where is thy soul of song ? Come, and with thee bring thy harp.”

CARRIL comes, bending gray on his staff. The voice of the harp is in his hand. Behind him walks the young bard from the shore of night : but his light mail falls to the ground. A white hand rises to cover the spreading blush. Whose hand is that so white ? whose face, through wandering locks, blushes so mild ?—“ Minla,” cried Conar, “ is it thou ! ”---Her arms in silence fold themselves about his neck.---The soul of the aged returned, as the sun when the storm is over. He gave the fair to Gormallon ; and we spread the fails, with songs, for Morven *.

* This is among the few ancient Galic poems which have a happy conclusion, and on that account deserves to be preserved. The ancient bards, no doubt, employed their muse in celebrating joyful as well as mournful events. But, as melancholy tender scenes are most apt to make a lasting impression on the memory, the latter are often remembered when the former are lost and forgotten.

D E R M I D *:
A P O E M.

THE ARGUMENT.

THIS poem opens with an address to the valley of Cona, in which its present silence is contrasted with its former busy scenes. Of these the story of Dermid's killing a wild boar of an enormous size, is singled out. After Dermid had killed this boar, he is desired by Connan, who bore him a grudge which the poem accounts for, to measure his length, with his bare soles, against the direction of the bristles on his back. Dermid, it seems, thought it might be a reflection upon his valour to decline the request. He complied; but the consequence proved fatal.

Graina, Dermid's wife, having been alarmed by the story of an old man whom she had met, after parting with Dermid, ran to his assistance with a spear, and arrived just as that which he had was broken in his encounter with the boar: but she herself being wounded by a random shot in the course of the chase, sits down near enough to be witness of the death of her beloved Dermid. Both are interred in the same place, and their elegy sung by the bards.

HOW peaceful, this night, art thou, O vale of Cona! No voice of thy hounds, no sound of thy harps is heard. The sons of the chase are gone to their rest, and the bed has been made for the bards. The murmur of thy stream, O Cona, is scarce perceived: the breeze shakes not the dew off thy bended grafts.

A a 2

The

* Dermid, the son of Duino, is frequently mentioned in other poems of Ossian, and much celebrated in the tales of later times. These, mixing their marvellous with the original poem, have ren-

dered it in a great measure absurd and extravagant. But they are for the most part of so heterogeneous a nature as to be easily separated.

† Cia

The gray thistle hangs over thy bank its sleepy head ; its hairs are heavy with the drops of night.—The roe sleeps, fearless, in the booth of the hunter ; his voice hath ceased to disturb her. She sees his tomb, amids green ferns, before her. Light-leaps over its mound her little kid. He rubs with his horn the moss from its gray stone ; and on the soft heap, when tired of play, he lays himself down to rest.

VALE of Cona †, how art thou changed ! And thou, hill of Golbun, how quiet is now thy heath ! Thou coverest thy head with thy dark veil of mist ; and slumberest in the noon of day. No voice of the hunter, no cry of the hound, travels along thy dark-brown side to awake thee.—I move forth when all is calm ; I lean my gray head on my spear, and listen if I may hear the echo of thy rocks. But thou art silent, O Golbun, in thy bed of clouds : no voice of thine is heard ; save when thou repliest to the sportive cry of the deer, when evening has half-hid the sun in the wave of the west. Then, thou dost reply ; but thy words are few : thou soon compest thyself again to thy slumber.

THOU wert not thus quiet, O Cona, when the king pursued thy deer, and made thy stream shake between its woody locks ; nor was thy silence such, O Golbun, when the son of Duino pursued thy boar, foaming like Lora in his winding course.

LISTEN

† Cia tiambahidh thu nochd a *Gheann-easthan* †
Gus guth gaohair thu, 's gun cheol, &c.

The *Gheann-easthan*, or *Cona*, of Offian has been supposed by some to be Glenco in Argyleshire ; and by others, Stratheonan in Murray. Both seem to be at too great a distance from the scene of this poem, if we may rely on tradition, which

places it in *Sligaoil* near Kintyre. What appears most probable is, that Fingal often shifted his habitation for the convenience of hunting, and might give several other places the same name with that of his principal residence.

—parvam Trojam, simulataque magnis,
Pergama.

LISTEN, son of Alpin, to the tale; thou wilt pour its light on the dark stream of future years.

THE morning was calm on Cona. Mountains faw in Ocean their gilded heads. The son of the deer beheld his young branches in the stream, when the sound of Fingal's horn is heard. Starting, he asks his mother what it means. She, trembling, bids him fly to the desart.—

“ THIS day,” said the king, “ we pursue the boar, the deadly boar of Golbun.”

* * * * *

WE sent the sons of the chase to the hill. Their cries, as they climb, are deep and loud. Golbun with all its woods resounds.

THE sound rose on Dermid's ear, as he lay in the cave of his rest. As a mountain-stream in the midst of rain, so leapt his soul with joy at the voice of the chase. “ My red spear, where art thou? and where art thou, my dark bow?”

NOT so glad was Graina in her cave, to which she had retired with her love from Connan's hate. The dark soul of Connan had loved Graina; but Graina gave her heart to Dermid. “ Heed not,” she said, “ the cry of the hounds; the chace of heroes is not awake on the hill.”

“ FAIR is thy form, my love; and like the bloom of trees in
spring

† Some repeat here a small fragment called *Nes Seilge*, or “ The manner of hunting.” As this poem is wholly a hunting adventure, it is probable these verses ought to have a place in it, if their incorrectness did not forbid it. The most accurate of them are the following, which denote their armour to have been nearly

the same as in going down to battle.

Gun ar n eide' 's gun ar n airm
Cha rachamaid a sheilg nan cnoc;
Bhiodh luireach oirn 's ceann-bhealair chorr,
'S da shleagh mhór ann dorn gach fir.
Bhiodh sgia uain' air a gheibhe' buaidh,
'S cloidhe cruaidh gr fgoita cheann,
Bogha cruadhach agus iughair
'S caogad guineach ann am bolg.

spring is thy beauty ; yet this day I must leave thee, with thy child, in the cave. I must mix with heroes on Golbun."

AND wilt thou leave me, said Grainá, loveliest of men ; wilt thou leave me, thou light of my soul in darkness ? Where is my joy but in the face of Dermid ? where is my safety but in thy shield of brafs ? Wilt thou leave me, thou fairer than the sun when he similes, after the shower, on th eleaf of the birch ; thou milder than his evening beams, when they play on the down of the mountain ? Thy son and I will be sad, if thou art absent, Dermid.

"GRAINA, dost thou not remember the moans of the crane, as we wandered early on the hill of our love *? With pity, thou didst ask the aged son of the rock, Why so sad was the voice of the crane ? ' Too long,' he replied, ' he hath stood in the fen ; and the ice hath bound his lazy foot.—Let the idle remember the crane, lest one day they mourn like him.'—Grainá, I will not rest longer here. Fingal might say, with a figh, ' One of my heroes is become feeble.'—No; king of Morven, the soul of Dermid is not a stream that will fail ; the joyful murmur of its course shall always attend thy steps. Rest thou in thy cave, my love ; with night I will return with the spoil of roes.

HE went, swift as the path of an arrow, when it whistles thro' the yielding air on its two gray wings. Grainá climbs, pensive and slow, the hill, to view the chase of roes from her rock. The light of her countenance is mild, but dim ; like the moon in the night of calm, when it moves in silence through the clouds, and seems

the

* 'S moch a ghoireas a chorr

Air an ion ata 'n *Slia'gaoil*.

Slia'gaoil, "the hill of love," is still the proper name of a mountain near Kintyre,

said to have been the residence of these lovers, and to have received from them its name.

† The

the darkened shield of a ghost, hung on high in his own airy hall *! She meets a son of age in the woods. Bending, he weeps over a gray stone. "Here," he said, "sleeps the spouse of my love; here, I reared over her the green turf.—Many were our days on the heath. We have seen one race, like the leaf of autumn, pass: we have seen another lift in its place its green head, and grow old. We have turned away our foot from trees, lest we might crush them in youth; and we have seen them again decay with years. We have seen streams changing their course; and nettles growing where feasted kings. All this while our joy remained; our days were glad. The winter with all its snow was warm, and the night with all its clouds was bright. The face of Minalla was a light that never knew a wane; an undecaying beam around my steps. But now she shines in other lands; when, my love, shall I be with thee?

" THERE too, fair maid, thou beholdest another tomb. Under it is the cold bed of the son of Colla. It was made by the trembling hand of his father. By the boar of the woods my son was slain. He fell near the cave of his dwelling. His spouse was preparing the feast for his return; 'I go,' I said, 'to look for his coming.' I went; I heard his cry; I ran with the short steps of age to assist him. Hanging by my robe, his son attends. We find his father dead. The boar had broke his spear in twain; and the sword in his cave was left. His child takes him by the hand, and bids him rise. 'Why,' he said, 'shouldst thou sleep without?'—Alas! he
hears

* The original word (*Ealachainn tairbhé*) signifies properly "the armoury of a ghost." The whole comparison, which is exceedingly beautiful, as well as fanciful, is subjoined.

Bha a braghad gu scimh a 'soillte
Mar ghealach ri oidhche fhaimhe;
Si ghuafad ro na neula balbha,
Mar fíga air *ealachainn tairbhé*.

hears thee not ; for the tusk of the boar hath torn him, and his sleep is heavy.—This morning sounds Fingal's horn to pursue the fatal boar. But its voice reaches not the ear of Tuthal ; the morning that shall rouse my son is distant. O Tuthal, why hadst not thou thy father's spear ?”

“ MOURNFUL,” said Grainna, “ is the tale of Colla. My tears in a stream could flow on the tombs of thy spouse and son. My tears could flow ; but I must fly with speed. My Dermid pursues the fatal boar ; who knoweth, my love, but thou mayst need a spear ? Colla, keep thou this child till I return. I fly to my love with a stronger spear.”

DERMID had come to the vale of Cona, like a fair light that grows in darkness. We rejoiced in his presence, as the mariners when the star, that long concealed itself in its cloud, looks again on their dark course, and spreads its beam around. The voice of songs is on the deep ; and seals lift up, through trembling waves, their heads to listen to the music.

WE climb Golbun of green hills, where the branchy horns of deer are seen in mist, and where lie thick the mossy beds of roes. From echoing rocks we start the boar, the red deadly boar of Golbun. We pursue him with all our dogs ; but he leaves them weltering in blood behind.

WHO, said the king, shall kill the boar of Golbun ; the boar that is red with the blood of heroes ; that hath slain so many of our hounds ? His shall be a spear, the gift of a king ; a shield with all its studs ; and the herbs of the secret stream, to heal the hero's wounds.

MINE,

MINE, replied Dermid, shall be the gift of the king; or I fall by the bristly foe, and lose the fame of the song.

HE spoke, and flew over the heath in the gleam of steel. His course was like the red cloud that bears the thunder on its wing when the fields of Fingal are silent and dark. Quaking heroes lift from Morven their eye, and behold in sky the fight of ghosts. It is Trenmor hurling his wrath against Lochlin's sons, when they come to pursue his airy deer.

ALREADY the roar of Dermid is on Benala. From Benala he flies to Benlora. Now the hill of Ledroma shakes under his feet; and now the hill of Elda.

THE boar flies before him, but not so fast. His path is marked with wreaths of foam. His noise is like the white tumbling of waves on the isle of storms; like the falling of rocks amidst the groves of the desert.—See! they ascend Drimruath: the spear of Dermid almost reaches the foe. It falls heavy on its sides; it marks them with red streams. It sounds like the fall of trees, with all their aged branches, on a rock. The vales along their winding banks resound.—But see! with fury red-glaring in his eye, he turns, as the stream of flames on a hill when the dark winds have changed.—As it were a bulrush or slender reed of Lego, he grinds the hard, tough spear of Dermid *.

“ O THAT thou wert near me, Graina! that my love would come from her cave, and bring me the spear of battle !”

B b

BRING

* The original of these two lines is a most remarkable *echo to the sense*. The one line is full of that harsh, grinding sound which it describes, and the other as smooth as the bulrush or reed of Lego

of which it speaks. The contrast between them has also a fine effect.

Chagnadh e a shleaghan readh iuadh!
Mar chulic na Leige, no mar luachair.

† It

“BRING it I do, my Dermid. From my cave I saw thy distress. Thither again I return. There look for me, my love, when the strife on the hill is over.”

AND what though he find thee too, hapless maid! Alas! the days of thy years are run.—An arrow in its wandering flight had met the fair in the course of the chase. In her breast of snow it is lodged; but she conceals it with her robe from Dermid.—Dear hast thou paid, O Dermid, for that weapon in thy hand; who shall tell thee what it cost thee?

WITH all his terrible might, the chief lifts his spear. Like a meteor of death, red-issuing from Lano’s cloud, a flood of light, it quick-descends. The head is lodged in the rough breast of the boar: the shaft flies, over trees, through air. His sword is in the hero’s hand; the old companion of his deeds in the hour of danger. Its cold point pierces the heart of the foe:—The boar, with all his blood and foam, is stretched on earth †.

WE rejoiced to see Dermid safe; we rejoiced all, but Connan. Measure, said that little soul, the boar which thou hast slain. Measure him with thy foot bare; a larger hath not been seen.

THE foot of Dermid slides softly along the grain; no harm hath the hero suffered.

MEASURE, said Connan, the boar against the grain; and thine, chief of spears, shall be the boon thou wilt ask.

THE soul of Dermid was a stranger to fear; he obeyed again the voice of Connan.—But the bristly back of Golbun’s boar, sharp as

† It is from this event that the clan of the Campbells, who derive their pedigree from this Dermid, have assumed the boar’s head for the crest of their arms. In the compositions of the later bards they are often called *Sliochd Dhìarmid an Tuirc*, or, “The race of Dermid who flew the boar.”

as his arrows and strong as his spear, pierces with a thousand wounds his feet. His blood dyes the ground ; it flows in wandering rills through the grass. The herbs of the mountain are applied ; but their virtue fails.—Dermid falls, like a tall pine, on the heath ‡.

All ! how quick the colour forsakes his cheek. It was red as the fruit that bends the mountain tree * ; but now it grows pale as the withered grass. A dark cloud spreads over his countenance, as thick mists that veil the face of the wintery sun, when the evening comes before its time.

“ THE shades of night gather on my eyes. I feel the decay of my strength. The tide that flowed in my heart hath ebbed away. Behind it I remain a cold, unmoving rock.—Thou shalt know it, Gráina, and be sad ; ah ! the pain of death is to part with my love.—But the shades of the night are gathering over my soul, Let Dermid sleep ; his eyes are heavy.”

Who shall tell it to Gráina ?—But Gráina is nigh. She leans

B b 2

be-

‡ The death of Dermid, in the manner it is here told, will appear somewhat odd. It is probable he had received some other wound in a more mortal part ; and that some of the poem, where his death may have been better accounted for, is lost. The current tradition with regard to this passage is, that Dermid was vulnerable in no part but in the sole of his foot, and that the great art of Connan was to get him wounded there. Whether this account of the matter, though common, be very old or very satisfactory, is a point in which the translator is not concerned.

* In poems chiefly depending on tradition, there must be in different editions

a considerable variation. Their comparisons frequently differ ; but they are always beautiful, and have the same scope. Thus, for instance, instead of the above simile, many have here another of the same nature, taken from the strawberry :

Ged' bu deirge do ghráidh nan t'subh
Bliodh air uilín enuic 's an sfeur;
Dh' fhas i nois dui'-neulach uaine,
Mar neul fuar air neart na grein.'

—Such as may, here, miss the dialogue concerning *Cuach Fhinn*, or the medicinal cup of Fingal, will remember that it is of so different a complexion from the rest of the poem, that no apology needs be made for rejecting it as the interpolation of some later bard.

beneath the shade of a tree. She hears the moans of her love : they awake her flumbersome soul. Hark ! she pours her faint song on the calm breath of the breeze. See ! her blood and her tears wander on her white breasts, like dark streams on the mountains of snow.

“ My love is fallen ! O place me in his bed of earth ; at the foot of that rock, which lifts, through aged trees, its ivy head. The sheeted stream, with murmuring grief, shall throw its waters over our tomb ; but O ! let it not wet the dark-brown hair of my love.—The stream still murmurs by ; some day its course may wash away the mound. The hunter, as whistling he goes careless by, will perceive the bow of Dermid, and say, ‘ This is Dermid’s grave.’ His spouse perhaps may be with him. Near the bow, she will observe this arrow in my breast ; and say, as she wipes her eye, ‘ Here was Graina laid beside her love.’—Musing, they move silently along ; their thoughts are of the narrow house. They look on each other, through glistening eyes. ‘ The fondest lovers,’ they say, ‘ must part at last.’ ”

—“ BUT stop, hunters of the mountain, and give the mighty his praise. No mean hunter of a little vale was he, whom you have passed, so careless, by. His fame was great among the heroes of Morven ; his arm was strong in their battles. And why should I speak of his beauty ; shall his comeliness remain with him in the tomb !—His breast was as the down of the mountain, or the snow on the tree of the vale, when it waves its head in the sun.—Red was the cheek, and blue the eye, of my love. Like the grass of the rock, flow-bending in the breeze, were his brows ; and sweeter than the music of harps or the songs of groves, was thy voice to virgins,

virgins, O Dermid!—But the music of thy voice is ceased, and my spirits can no more be cheered. The burden of my grief is heavy: The songs of Norven's bards cannot remove it. It will not listen to all the larks that soar in the lowly vale, when the dewy plains rejoice in the morning sun of summer.—But what hath Graina to do with the sun of the morning; or what hath Dermid to do with summer? When shall the sun rise in the tomb? When shall it be summer in the grave, or morning in the narrow house? Never shall that morning shine, that shall dispel our slumber, O Dermid *!"

WE

* Cha dealruich a mhaidin *gu La bhrath*
A ch'fhogras do phramb, a Sbuinn!

The word *la bhrath*, in its literal and primary sense, signifies “the day of burning,” which was the Druidical term for the dissolution of the world *by fire*, as *gu dilinn* was their name for the alternate revolution which they supposed it should undergo *by water*. In a metaphorical sense both words came to denote *never*, or “till the end of the world,” which for many ages back has been their only acceptation. Hence, a translator is naturally led to render these and the like words by their present meaning, without adverting to their etymology or ancient signification. This is one reason why more religious ideas do not appear in the works of Ossian, which, if examined, in the original, will be found to contain many allusions to the Druidical tenets. The word under our present consideration, tho' it is now universally understood to signify *never*, was used, long after the introduction of Christianity, to denote the dissolution of the world *by fire*, as among the Druids from whom it was borrowed. In that

famous prophecy of St Columba, to which his monastery owed so much of its repute, it has this meaning, *Seachd la' ro an bhrath*, &c. “Seven days before the dissolution of the world, a flood shall cover the other kingdoms, but Iona shall swim above it.” Ossian, who uses the word frequently in his poems, probably affixed to it this idea, much oftener than that of *never* as we do at present. In the original the word is always more emphatical than can easily be expressed in a translation. An instance or two will make this obvious to such as understand both languages. One occurs in the battle of Lora, where Bofmina says to Erragon,

“ 'S nim faicear a d' thalla *gu bhrath*
Airm agh'or mo dheagh Ri'.”

“ *Never* shall they behold in thy halls the victorious arms of the king.”

In the first book of Temora, Fingal mourning over the fallen Oscar, says

“ *Gu la bhrath* chon eirich Oscar!”

“ *Never more* shall Oscar rise,” is scarce so emphatical.

WE laid the lovely pair in their bed of earth. The spear of his strength, with his bow, is beside Dermid ; and with Graina is laid the arrow that was cold in her breast. Fingal bended on his spear over their grave. A dark stream descended on his cheek. His bards saw his grief. Each assumed his harp, and gave the name of the dead to the song.—Heroes, mournful, stood around. Tears flowed from the eye of hounds, as they rested on dark-brown shields at their feet.

“ PEACEFUL, O Dermid, be thy rest ; calm, son of Duino, be thy repose, in thy dark and lowly dwelling !—The din of arms is over ; the chase of the boar is ceased ; the toil of the day is ended ; and thou, heedless of the return of the morning, art retired to thy slumbering rest.—The clang of the shield, the noise of the chace shall not awake thee. No ; Dermid, thy sleep is heavy !

“ BUT who can give thy fame to the song, thou mighty chief ! Thy strength was like the strength of streams in their foam : thy speed like the eagle of Atha, darting on the dun trembling fawn of the desert. In battle, thy path was like the rapid fall of a mountain stream *, when it pours its white torrent over the rock, and sends abroad its gray mists upon the wing of winds. The roar of its stream is loud through Mora’s rocks. Mountain-trees, with all their moss and earth, are swept along, between its arms.—but when it reaches the calm sea of the vale, its strength is lost, and the noise of its course is silent. It moves not the withered leaf if

the

* The following lines, altho’ defective, being only one of the editions from which this passage is made up, are so beautiful as to deserve their room :

Eli do neart mar thuiteach uisge,
Dol alos a chlaoidh do namh ;

Ann cabhaig mar iolair nan speur,
No flead eisg a’ ruith air fail’.
A thriath threun a b’ aille leadan
Na aon fhleagach tha ‘fan Fheinn,
Gu ma fumhach a raibh t’ or-chul,
Fui’ chndrom na foide re !

* In

the eddying wind doth not aid it.—On eddying winds let thy spirit be borne, son of Duino, to thy fathers ; but light let the turf lie over thy beauteous form, and calm in the grave be thy slumber !

“ A VESSEL rides the surgy deep *. It bounds from ridge to ridge. Its white sails are spread to the wind. It braves the fury of the storm.—‘ It is the son of Duino’s !’—Yes, stranger, it was the son of Duino’s ; but now the son of Duino is no more. There, he hovers, a faint form, above ; and the boar is half-viewlefs beside him.

“ THE horn sounds on the mountain. The deer start from the moss of rocks ; from the banks of their secret streams. The unerring dart of the hunter pursues them on the heath. One of them is arrested in the midst of his course. Panting he tastes the cooling fount. His knees shake, like the reedy grass in the stream of winds. He falls as he climbs the bank. His companions attempt with their head to raise him, but in vain ; they are forced to forsake him and fly.—They fly, but the hunter pursues them. ‘ His speed is like the speed of Dermid !’—Alas ! stranger, it is not he. The son of Duino sleeps in his lowly dwelling, and the hunters horn cannot awake him.

“ THE foes come on with their gathered host. A mighty stream meets them in their course. Its torrent sweeps them back, and overturns their grove of spears.—‘ It is,’ faith the son of the stranger, ‘ one of the warriors of Morven ; it is the strength of Dermid !’—The strength of Dermid, replies his companion, hath failed.

At

* In this elegy of the bards over Dermid, the various accomplishments of that hero are remarked ; and appear the more striking from their being put, for the most part, in the mouth of strangers.

At the foot of that ivy rock I saw, as I passed, his tomb. The green fern had half-hid the gray stone at his head. I pulled its rank growth away: Why shouldst thou, vile weed, I said, obscure the fame of the hero?

“ A YOUTH comes, whistling, across the plain. His arms glitter to the sun as it sets. His beauty is like that sinking beam, that spreads around him its rays; and his strength is like his beauty. —The virgins are on the green hill above; their robes are like the bow of the shower; their hair like the tresses of the sun, when they float on the western wave in the season of calm. They admire the stately beauty of the warrior, as lightly he moves along. —‘ The youth,’ they say with a sigh, ‘ is like Dermid.’ —The memory of the son of Duino rises on their soul, as a beam that breaks on blasted Mora, through the torn edge of a dusky cloud. In sorrow they bend their heads. The tears shine through their spreading locks, like stars through the wandering hair of the moon. They fall like the tears of Ossian when they flow for Oscar of Lego.

“ THE children of youth are tossing their little spears. They see the hero on the plain. ‘ There comes Dermid!’ Their ready spears are thrown away, and they forsake the shield of willow. Their steps of joy are quick to meet the maker of their bows. But they see it is not he, and in mid-way they stop. Slow, they return to their play; but the noise of their harmless battle is not heard, for their little souls are sad for Dermid.

“ THE voice of music and the sound of the harp are heard in Fingal’s hall. The benighted traveller is charmed as he approaches. A moment he leans his breast upon his staff, and, fidel-

long,

long, bends his listening ear.---‘ It is Dermid !’ he says ; and hastens to overtake the song.---A beam of light, clear but terrible, comes across his soul. He makes two unequal strides ; in the midst of the third he stops. ‘ Dermid is no more !’---He wipes with the skirt of his robe his eye ; and, sighing, slowly-walks along.---It is the voice of the bards thou dost hear, O stranger ; they are pouring the fame of Dermid on future times ; clothing his name with the nightly song. The chief himself, in Selma thou shalt find no more. He sleeps with Graina in the cold and narrow house. On Golbun’s heath thou wilt find it, at the side of the stream of roes.---A rock, dark-bending with its ivy mantle above, shelters from storms the place. A mountain-stream leaps over it, white, and murmuring travels on. A yew spreads its dark-green branches nigh : the deer rests undisturbed at noon beneath its shade. The mariner leaning to his mast, as he passes on the darkly-rolling wave, points out the place, and tells his mates the woful tale. The tear bedims their eye. They cannot mark the spot : they heave the deep note of grief, and fail to the land of strangers. There, they tell the tale to listening crowds around the flame of night. The virgins weep, and the children of youth are mournful. All day they remember Dermid and Graina ; and in the dreams of their rest they are not forgotten.”

AND often you descend to the dreams of Ossian too, children of beauty. Often you possess his thoughts, when he sits, alone, at your tomb ; and listens if he may hear the song of ghosts. At times, I hear your faint voice in the sigh of the breeze, when I rest beneath your green tree, and hang my harp on its low-bending

branch.---But Ossian is a tree that is withered*. Its branches are blasted and bare ; no green leaf covers its boughs. From its trunk no young shoot is seen to spring. The breeze whistles in its gray moss : the blast shakes its head of age.---The storm will soon overturn it, and strew all its dry branches with thee, O Dermid ! and with all the rest of the mighty dead, in the green winding vale of Cona.

How peaceful art thou, O vale of Cona ! Thy warriors and thy hunters are all gone to rest. Let the bed be also made for the bard ; for the shades of night thicken around him, and his eyes are heavy.

* No image could better represent the forlorn condition of the poet than this which he has chosen. The words, too, in which he describes it, are full of that soft and mournful sound which is expressed in the Galic by the diphthong *ao*, and the triphthong *aoi*; sounds which, so far as I know, are peculiar to the Galic lan-

guage, and highly congenial to the more soft and mournful feelings.

Tha mise mar gheig na h aonar,
Si gu mosgaio maol gan duileach,
Gun mhaothan ri taobh, no organ,
Ach osna bhoirin a' cao' na mullach.
'S fagus an doinion, a sgaoileas
A crionach aofd' air feadh a ghlinne.
Mu leabaidh Dhiarmaid s nan laoch lughar
Aig Caothan nan lubhan uaine.

FINAN AND LORMA * :

A P O E M.

THE ARGUMENT.

THE children of Morven, having given Ossian a description of two ghosts which they supposed they had seen in the clouds, are informed of their names;---the manner of their death;---the grief of their father Murno;---the ceremony of his resigning his arms in old age, when his race became extinct;---with the song of the bards on that occasion;---and the episode of Turloch and his children, which had been introduced to comfort Murno and the lover of Lorma.

WHAT is it you behold in the face of night, children of the sportful days? Is it the snow that rests white on Morven's top; or the gray smoke of the halls of air? Do you behold the daughter of night pale in clouds; or is her face seen in the calm stream in Cona's vale? Hear you the mournful spirit of the mountain; or do you listen to the voice of ghosts in the gale of winds?

“ MORVEN, O bard, is white. The moon is in the stream: the spirit of the mountain speaks; and the voice of ghosts is in the gliding gale. But in none of these is our thought. Our eye is in

* Often called *Dan chlanna Muirne*, “the song of the children of Murno.” As the number of names in this poem may render it somewhat intricate, especially near the beginning, it may be pro-

per to remember, that Murno was the father of Finan and Lorma; that Ardan was his father, Torman his bard, and Dunalva the place of his residence.

two clouds; their mist in moon-beams is white: their steps are from Alva of roes; on the wind of night flows their streamy hair. Two dark-gray dogs attend the one. His bow in his dim hand is strung.---From the white side of the other runs a coloured stream; her long robes seem stained with blood. Her face is sad, but lovely; and the tear is still on her cheek.---Keep off, O blast, a little while, till we behold the forms.---But thou rollest them together in thy dark cloud; and scatterest, like gray smoke, their limbs.---Over the rushy vale, over the hill of hinds, they wander on the wings of their rustling mist.---Bard of other times, dost thou know the forms; canst thou tell the children of Morven their names?"

THE years that are past return: the soul of Ossian is full of the song. Its voice comes like the sound of waves; it travels on the evening gale after their force on the distant shore is broke, and the stormy winds are laid.---Children of Murno, I remember your song; its sound has been long from Selma.

CHILDREN of youth, your eyes, like mine, may one day fail. You may ask the children of the years to come, what they see in the face of clouds. "We see," they will say, "two youthful ghosts; and beside them, in his dun cloud, bends their aged father. They will then ask of you the tale of the ghosts of night. Listen to it from Ossian, lest you should say, "We know not."

WHO comes trembling on the staff of age? His eyes dwell in dark, red-edged clouds: within them is the shower of tears. His gray hair is on the gale of winds, and the sigh of his voice is mournful.---Murno, why so sad? Are not the eyes of Finan flames in battle; lifts he not the shield with heroes? Are not the steps of Lorma also on the hill of roes; bends she not the bow with vir-

gins?

gins? Why then, Murno, is thy face of age so sad; is there no found in the harp of Torman?

“ NOT without cause is Murno sad; not without cause is his countenance mournful. Finan! thou liftest the shield no more in battle. Lorma! thy steps are not on the hill of roes with virgins. My children! in the tomb you are both asleep; and the foul of your father is sad. It is sad in the midst of harps, like a cloud of mist in the valley of the sun, when the hills expect the shower.

“ TORMAN, take that moony shield: that sword which is a stream of light; that spear, tall as an oak of the vale; and that burnished helmet which shines so bright. They are the arms which Ardan wore: the arms that were worn by the father of Murno. From a chief of other lands he won them, when first Trenmor and he, in one day, lifted against foes the spear. ‘ Let the first of your fields,’ said their fathers, ‘ be marked with fame. From his first name grows the renown of the hero *.’—

“ THEY rushed to the war of Clutha, like two young eagles of heaven, when they first pursue in their rushing course one young fawn on Dora. Many were the heroes that rolled in dust before Trenmor; and Ardan won these arms from Duthoran. But thy race, O Ardan, shall no longer wield them. Only two trees, tall on the banks of Alva, were they! The mossy branches of one lone tree is bare; and the green youth of another, like the shorn flower in the sun, is withered. The son is laid on the tomb, and the father bends over the narrow house. The first blast shall lay him low; and the race no more is found.—Torman, hang in Ardan’s hall the arms

* This line is a common proverb in Galic, used to recommend an early attention to character. ‘Se cliu duine a cheud icmra.’

arms of battle. The feeble in the days to come may see them, and admire the race that has failed. They will try to lift the arms, but cannot : ‘ Mighty,’ they will say, ‘ was the race of Alva.’

“ Two bards bore to Dunalva the arms, and bade them remain to future times. One shield was hung, a darkened moon, on high. Another, with the head of a spear, was laid deep in its bed of earth. Nor retired the arms of heroes to their rest, without their own peaceful song.

“ DESCEND, said the bards, O Ardan, thou rider of Morven’s mist in the storm ; descend from thy cloud, and behold thy arms ! Let the dim smile of joy, between thy tears, arise ; for thy race brought no stain upon the fame of thy steel, though now they shall no longer lift it. Thy spear, in their hand, always shone where the battle was darkest ; but the blood of the feeble was never a dark spot on its blue edge. Thy shield was a rock, which the lightning of battle often tore : in no feeble hand was it ever lifted. Murno was a storm that tears the oak ; and a flame that consumes the grove was Finan.

“ DESCEND, Ardan, from thy mist ; guard the shield of thy race in Dunalva †. Let no little soul touch it ; let no hand of the cruel come nigh it. Such were not the lifters of this shield ; the bouncers on this spear ; the heroes of the race of Ardan.—Keep off, son of the little soul ; what hast thou to do with the arms of heroes ?

Retire

† It was probably from poetical fictions or antique notions of this nature, that the belief sprang, which still prevails in the Highlands, of every family-seat or house of distinction being inhabited by one or two *genii*, who are supposed to superintend the affairs of it, and to punish ser-

vants for their misdemeanours. What gave still more weight to this opinion, were the corrections frequently bestowed on servants in the dark ; the effects of which sometimes shewed, that they did not proceed from such “ unreal mockeries.”

Retire to thy secret stream, where was never heard the noise of the spear, the echo of the battle. There, live with deer; grow gray with the beard of the thistle. Sleep in the same mossy bed with them in death; thy fame unsung, thy tomb unknown, thy race unnoticed. One by one, they fall around thy tomb, unheeded; as ferns die in the deep cleft of the rock, where they grow in secret. They grow, they decay, they die: no traveller shall ever say, Behold them!—From the desert comes a wintery blast; on its cloudy wing sits Death, pale, grim, unlovely. Thousands are his quivers; and many are his bows, always strung. Through the secret vale as he passes, he beholds in his bed the lazy man. He draws the string. The arrow silent flies. It strikes; it kills; but its mark is not seen in the breast, like the death that is dealt by the steel of the valiant, in the fields of fame. Heroes raise over the feeble no tomb: bards sing no song: virgins touch no harp. The little soul now hangs in the bowels of cold, dark mist; like the fish locked in the ice of Lano's stream; and now, it is tossed on fenny clouds, the sport of rushing winds. His course is often with the vapour of death, that hovers on marshy lakes, and sends forth its blasts, like secret arrows, to bring death to nations.—Never are his steps on green woody hills, on sunny plains with heroes*.

“ BUT such were not thy race, Ardan; the lifters of thy brown shield in war.—Guard it on high, thou dweller of storms; frighten the feeble when they approach it in thy hall.—But the hall shall

one

* This passage alludes to the notion which the Celtic tribes had of a future state; the punishment of which, in their opinion, consisted chiefly in thick darkness and extreme cold. The utter con-

tempt in which they held such as led an idle and inactive life, appears from their confining them to this region of horrors after death

† Be-

one day be no more. Like a gray tree which the blast hath over-turned in the flood, it shall fall; and its top shall be wet in the midst of Alva. The crowded stream shall change its course. Through the ruin is its wandering way. The thorn had been lifting there its flowery head: the brier was green betwixt the mossy stones. The heath and the fern shook there, in the breeze of night, their heads, and formed a bed for the dun roes.—The stream came. It washed away the mound of earth. In the face of the broken bank juts out the dark-crusted shield. The hunter observes it, as he bounds over the stream in his course. ‘What dark orb,’ he says, ‘is that; dim as the circle within the new horns of the moon?’—He looses away, with his spear, the earth: his soul travels, glad, through the ages that have been. Lifting his head he looks around, and sees the palace of other years in its own green tomb. ‘The dwelling of heroes,’ he says, ‘has been here; the hall of kings in the years that are no more.’—Yes, stranger, thou standest in the hall of kings: touch not their dark-brown shield, if thou art not of the race of heroes. For that was the shield of Ardan.—Ardan! thou dweller of the tempest’s wing, descend from thy mist: descend on thy rustling blast, and receive thy arms.—Guard them in the hall of Dunalva †.’

SUCH was the song of the bards, when they hung on high the arms of Murno. But the soul of the chief still is sad. The sigh of his breast is heard, at times, like the sound of a lonely wave, or the sigh of the gale in the grass of the tomb.—We bring him to

Selma

† Besides this solemn resignation of arms made by the last person of any race to the ghosts of his fathers or tutelar spirits of his family, it appears from several passages in the ancient Galic poetry, that every hero at a certain age was allowed to “hang up his arms in the hall,” and decline the toils of battle.

Selma in the silence of grief. Two tombs, as we go, lift their green heads before us on the heath. On earth between them Murno lies. None said unto the chief, Arise. All lie on the grafs around, and listen to the mournful tale of his children.

“ MORNING rose on the isle of Croma, and the horn of my son was heard. Three gray dogs leap around him, and lift their ears with joy at the sound of his quiver. They bound in their skiff through the strait, and pursue the dark-brown deer of Croma. With evening we see the skiff return. The waves arise on the deep. The skiff is seen at times on their white tops: but, suddenly sinking, it disappears. In vain we look for it again; it is concealed in the sea, or in night.

“ My soul trembled for my son. But old as I was, what could I do?—I bade the years that were past return; but they heard me not. The path of their course was distant, and the voice of Murno was feeble. My daughter too shrieked, and shook my aged soul, as shakes the blast the dry leaf of the desart.—‘ O my brother! my brother of love! in the storm art thou lost?—Art thou lost, my brother?’

“ To the shore she rushed. Distracted, wild were her looks. The sea had shrunk from a dark rock. To its tops are the steps of the maid. Her looks and her cries are towards the deep. ‘ My brother, my only brother of love, dost thou not hear the cry of thy sister?’

“ DIM appears a dark spot on the foamy top of a wave.—‘ Is that the wandering ooze; or is it thou, my brother?’ He heard her voice; and with one faint note he replied. Fear and joy divide, by turns, her soul.—Two of the gray dogs had reached the shore:

the third, in the foam of waves, was lost. The two heard the voice of Finan fail. They bound again into the surgy deep. They return, with Finan, on the third wave; but one breathes on the beach his last.

“ LORMA bore her brother to the rock. ‘ Here,’ he faintly said, ‘ Let me for a little rest, for my strength is failed.’

“ SHE wrapt her robe about his breast, and made his pillow of the weeds that were driest.

“ HE sleeps. The maid in silence bends over his face. She bids the waves be still, and the noisy path of their whales be distant. And distant be your rustling course, ye winds of the mountain; and soft be your gliding, ye streams from the vale of hinds. Quiet, through the bosom of woods, be the noise of your torrents: and silent, through rustling leaves, be your steps, ye dun-bounding roes. Let my brother of love sleep, for his eyes are heavy. Soft, Finan, on the dark rock be thy sleep; calm, my brother of love, be thy slumbers.

“ BUT, ah me! his face is pale; it is wan, as the moon in her gray watery cloud. The countenance of my brother is unlovely. Perhaps he still dreams of the troubled deep; for his brow is dark. It is clouded as the face of children in their unsettled rest, when their dreams are of the coming of wolves †.—Mothers of the tender foul, do you then awake your children from their slumbers? Do you bid their sleep depart, and scatter, as mist

on

† *Mar ghnuis leinibh, 's e'n fusin gun shois,
A bruadar air maddai' nan coiltcean.*

Some have quarrelled with Ossian for not making mention of the wolf, so frequent at that time in his country. But these

gentlemen ought to remember, that a great part of Ossian's works is lost, in which mention may have been frequently made of this and many other things which we now desiderate.

on the gale, the fear of their dreams? Yes, you do awake them: but I will not awake my brother of love till the morning come, for his strength is failed; his sleep is heavy.—But the flies of night disturb thee, Finan. How shall I keep them away? Thy face, with my own, I'll softly cover; but I will not dispel thy slumber.—Ah! my brother, thou art cold.—Thou hast no breath—thou art dead! my brother! O my brother!

“ *HER* cries ascend on the rock. As I approach they strike my ear. The sea grows, and she perceives it not. She loads with her cries the wind. The beating on her white breast is loud; the howling of the gray dog is wild. My soul melts on the shore with grief. Often it bade me rush to the relief of my child. But the voice within me said, ‘ Murno, thou art old and feeble; the days of thy cleaving the deep are over.’

“ *THE* gathering wave lifts my children from the rock: it tosses them on its breast to the shore. There dark rocks meet them with their force, and the side of Lorma is torn. Her blood tinges the wave: her soul is on the same blast with Finan.

“ *SAD*, O my children, have you left your father: the name of parent I will hear no more. I stand on the heath, a blasted oak; no more shall my branches flourish. Autumn is dark on the plain. The trees are bare on the brown heath. Their leaves with the spring shall return; but no green leaf of mine shall lift, in the summer-shower, its head. The race of Alva is failed, like the blue smoke of its halls when the beam of the oak is decayed.—Great is the cause of Murno's grief; for one night hath seen him without a child. Thy tomb, O Finan, is here; and here thy grave, O Lorma!”

THE foul of the aged was sad. The burst of his grief still arose. We remain silent in our place, like ghosts when the winds are calm; like a stream of ice when it sleeps between two banks of snow, and shews to the pale moon its glittering beard.

BUT who comes, wandering, wild on the mountains, like the roe that hath lost his companion among the woody streams. His yellow hair wanders on the dark breath of winds. Unequal are his steps. Frequent the burst of his grief: the sigh of his breast is mournful. It is like the voice of a blast in a cave, when the waves, before it, toss themselves in a storm.—It is Uran, the bender of the bow; the love of thy youth, O Lorma! He had come to Dunalva in the night of storms: but the halls were silent and dark. Two blue stars had used to shine there. But now he saw them not; set were the eyes of Lorma.

“ LORMA, where dost thou rest? My love, where are thy flumbers? Has the night seized thee in the lonely chace; has darkness hid thy steps in the desart? Daughter of the bow, where dost thou rest? O that I knew thy place; then should I haste to find thee! Dost thou sleep at the foot of a gray rock; is thy bed of moss on the bank of streams? Ah me! if it is, the breasts of my love will be wet: they will be wet, and the night is cold.—It is cold: but peaceful be thy rest, dweller of the soul of Uran; let thy dreams of me be lovely.—

—“ DISTURB her not, ye spirits of the night on your blasts; ruffle not her hair, ye winds; blow not away that smile on the lips of my love.—My love is calm in the midst of storms; for the thoughts of her soul in the seafon of rest is Uran.—Glide smoothly by her, ye streams of the valley of rocs: skip quietly, ye dun sons

of the mountain, through your bush. Eagles of the hill of hinds, let the rustling of your wings, in the desart, be distant. See that ye disturb not the dreams of my love; that ye awake not the flumbers of Lorma.—Sleep on, O Lorma; let not the murmur of the stream, nor the rustling of the storm in trees, affright thee. Sleep on; with morning, I will come and awake thee. I will awake thee, but my voice will be soft. It will rise in thy ear like the hum of the mountain bee, when he travels on the wing of the breeze at a distance. The voice is lost at times: the brown son of the wing is drinking the dew of roses, where they grow on their secret banks.—Sleep on, O Lorma; and if the flumber of night descends on the soul of Uran, rise thou in the dream of his rest, and let the look of thy eye be lovely!"

HE rested on the mossy bank. Sleep half-descended on his foul. The murmur of Alva in his ear was les. The moon still looked through the windows of his rest; for only by halves were his eye-lids closed.—Before him twice arose the fighing Lorma. She was like a white cloud before the moon, when her light is dim, and her countenance sad. Uran knew the ghost of his love. He wandered, mournful, wild on the heath. The voice of Murno reached his ear: he perceived the two green mounds of earth. He dropped the bow. He fell. But why should I tell the grief of Uran?—Silence was long on the hill. The bard of Morven, at length, took the harp. We leaned forward our breasts upon its sound, and listened, as he sung with the voice of grief.

“ TURLOCH lived at Lubar of streams. In deeds of fame his hair grew white. Strangers knew the way to his hall: in the broad path there grew no mountain-graſs. No door had he to his

gate,

gate. ‘ Why,’ he said, ‘ should the wanderer see it shut?’ Turloch was tall as the oak of his vale. On either side, a fair branch lifted its green-growing head. Two green trees smiling in the shower, and looking through rainbows on the sun, were the two children of Turloch. Heroes admired the beauty of Migul; and virgins, with secret pleasure, beheld the steps of Althos. ‘ He is stately,’ said the strangers, ‘ as the son of Turloch; and she is fair,’ they said, ‘ as the maid at Lubar’s rolling waters.’

“ LONG did the years of Turloch glide smoothly by. Their steps were silent as the stream of his valc. Joy smiled in the face of the chief, like the sun-beams on the brow of his hill, when no cloud travels in the road of heaven *.

—“ BUT ever-varying, as the face of the sky, are the days of man upon his mountains. The storm and the calm roll there in their course; the light and the shade, by turns, are there.

“ MIGUL one day went forth to the chase. In her white hand was the bended bow; and two gray dogs bounded, through the morning dew, in her steps. Swift as mists that fly through heaven when the winds are high, they pursued on hills the deer. Migul drew the string. Her winged darts were unerring as death. On the brown heath the sons of the mountain, gasping, fell.

“ THE huntress sits on her rock. The thunder is heard on the hill. The clouds gather like night. The streams descending from the

* Where different images are used in the different editions of the original, they are often joined in the translation, when the sense and poetry admit of it. In other places, however, some of the original is omitted, as here, where a part of the pas-

age seems to be borrowed from an encomium of Ossian upon his beloved Oscar in another poem.

Bha do chroidhe mar ghaithaibh greine
S do spiorad mar chanach fleibhe
Be do nos bhi aoiibheil failteach
Mar na rofaibh air gach faire.

the mountains are white, and Lubar rolls in foam. How shalt thou cross it to thy home, thou trembling maid?

“ Althos saw his sister approach. He knew where two bending rocks almost met above the stream. An aged oak spreads its arm across: often had the trembling hunters of other times crept along its moss in the day of storm. Here stood Althos, above the deep. ‘ Give me, my sister, thy hand.’—Both shake upon the bending branch: it quakes; it cracks; it breaks; it falls!

“ TURLOCH was kindling the fire in his hall. My daughter from the hill, he faid, is wet.

“ A CRY strikes his ear, as he fans the flame. Sudden-starting, he issues forth. He sees his two children shoot along the stream; they are clung to one aged branch.

“ HE cried; but his cries were vain. Night, descending on the vale was dark. The rocks till morning heard his moan; and deer, awaking at the sound, leapt wildly from Lubar’s banks.—Day found him wandering there; and night again overtook him in the same place. But his children at the dark stream he found not; and sad he returned to his empty house. Long did it echo to his sighs; and long did he wander at the dark stream, when the children of the vale had retired to rest.

“ THE shield of battle, at length, was struck. Turloch heard, as he wept on Lubar’s banks, the sound. He failed with his people to Ialin; but they landed, as they passed, in Ithulmo.—There, two lovely beams met them on the rock; benders of the bow, when bounds before them the dun roe. The eye of Turloch darkened with grief as he beheld their beauty, in the midst of the children of the isle.—‘ Two such lovely beams were you once in my sight, my chil-

children! Such was thy stateliness, O Althos! and such thy beauty, O Migul!"

"THEY heard the voice of their father, on the isle to which they were borne, by the oak, on the wing of streams. They heard it, and sprang to his arms with joy.—The face of the aged again was bright; and gladness returned to Lubar."

"THY children, O Murno," added the voice of age *, "are, like those of Turloch, only lost for a season. They are only gone before thee on their own stream to the land of the happy. There thou shalt soon behold them lovely, lifting their young heads in the midst of heroes. Already, their course is in the fair mists that wander on the face of the moon; when she looks pale through clouds, and shines in the stream of Alva. Let, therefore, the grief of Uran be forgot, for there he will find his Lorma. Let the tear of the red eye of Murno be wiped off, for there he will find his children."

THE grief of the mourners calmed by degrees. Uran was like a tree, which, though the storm is laid, still shakes its waving head: and the bosom of Murno still heaved above the sigh; like waves which toss themselves, at times, after the winds have retired.

C A T H-

* The original of this passage is beautiful, and deserves here a place. The translation may appear somewhat fuller in one or two of the expressions, owing, here and in some other places, either to the abruptness of the original, or to the admission of an epithet or idea somewhat differently expressed in other editions. Such as will take the trouble of comparing any of the other Galic passages with the English, will please extend this remark to them also: it will account for a few

inconsiderable variations which they may meet with.

Is amhail sin air an frutha' fein
Dh' imich, re seal, clanna Muire;

Ach gheibhearr iad ann Inse nan Treun,

Mar iurain aoibhinn 's an doire uaine.

Cheana chitear an caoin-chruth
A' snamh doilleir seach Gealach na h oidhche,

Tra fheallas i nuas fui' smal

Air Alva nan ecime ciuine.

Caifg, Urain, mata do bhron,
Sna biodh do dheoirs', a Mhuirne, co sruitheachd;
Sgach aon, air a feud-sruth fein,
Ann deigh's a chairdean ag im' eachd.

C A T H L U I N A:

A P O E M *.

THE ARGUMENT.

ANNIR, the daughter of Moran, having been loved by two intimate friends, Gaul and Garno, resolved to get rid of the last by a stratagem.—In the disguise of a stranger, she brought him a challenge from Duaran, who, she alleged, was his rival, and whose prowess she thought he would not choose to encounter. But being disappointed in this, and resolved to get rid of Garno at any rate, she delivers the same message to Gaul, confident that his superior valour would give him the victory.—The two friends met in the night, and fell by mutual wounds. The issue of her plot affected Annir so much, that she could not long survive it.—The poem opens with some reflections suggested by the scene where they were all buried, and concludes with their funeral song.

I HEAR the murmur of the brook; I hear its fall over the rock.
Lead me, son of youth, to that oak which spreads its branches over the stream. At its foot, three gray stones lift through withered grafts their heads, and meet the falling leaves. There sleep the friends of Ossian. The murmuring stream they hear not: the rustling leaves they heed not. In the chamber of their rest, the steps of our approach will not disturb them.

E e

MANY

* In the district of Lorn in Argyleshire, there is a lake which is now called Loch-avich, but anciently Loch-luina, or Lochluana. Near it was probably the scene of this poem. Many places in its neighbourhood are still denominated from Ossian's heroes.

The son of youth, to whom this piece is

addressed, is supposed to be the same with the son of Alpin, so often mentioned in some other ancient poems. Tradition relates many stories of him; among others, that he took down in writing all the poems of Ossian as they had been repeated to him by that old and venerable bard.

MANY, son of youth, were the valiant on the hills of Morven, in the days of our joy. But the blast came and spoiled our wood of its leaves. It overturned our lofty pines on their green mountains. It whistled with its wintery noise through our palaces, and marked its dark path with death. The season of our joy is a sun-beam that is past; the voice of gladness in our hall is a song that hath ceased; and the strength of our heroes is a stream that is no more. The owl dwells in our fallen walls, and the deer graze on the tombs of the valiant. The stranger comes from afar to beg the aid of the king. He sees his halls, and wonders they are desolate. The cow-herd, careless, whistling, meets him on the dusky heath, and tells him the heroes are no more. "Whither," he says, "are the friends of the feeble gone; and where is Fingal, the shield of the unhappy?"—They are gone, O stranger, to their fathers. The blast hath laid the mighty, like the tall pines of Dora, low; and the sons of the feeble grow in their place. Thou feest on every hill the tombs of those who helped the unhappy. Thou feest their stones half-funk, amidst the rank rustling grass of the vale. The heroes have made their bed in dust; and silence, like mist, is spread on Morven.

BUT the voice of Cona's harp, ye mighty dead, shall be heard in your praise. The stranger, as he passes, may attend perhaps to the song. Listening on his spear, at times, he stands. The bard sees him not, but his sighs are often heard. Humming the tale he goes away, and, mournful, tells it at the streams of his land. Young bards shall hear it as they bend, silent, over their listening harps. On future times they will pour the song.

WE are come to the place; but where are the stones that mark
the

the abode of my friends? Lift your heads, ye gray mossy stones; lift your heads, and tell whose memory you preserve. Why shrink you in your moss, forgetful of the mighty below you?—But I will not forget you, companions of my youth. Your fame shall remain in my song, when these mouldering stones shall fail.—Often did we shine together in steel, and pour death on fields, like roaring streams. Mighty were ye then, my friends, though now so low! Mighty were your deeds when you strove together here. Listen to the tale, son of youth, and let thy soul be kindled to deeds of fame.

GAUL * and Garno were the terrors of the plain: their fame was in the land of strangers. The strength of their arms was unmatched, and their souls were steel. They came to the aid of Moran. They went to the hall of the chief, where it lifts its gray head, in the midst of trees, in the green isle of Innisluina.—The daughter of Moran seized the harp, and her voice of music praised the strangers. Their souls melted at the song, like a wreath of snow before the eye of the sun. The heroes burned with equal love to Annir; but it was on Gaul alone that she rolled her blue eye. Her soul beheld him in the dreams of her rest; and the streams of Innisluina heard, in secret, his name.—The daughter of Moran turned away her eye from the brow of Garno; for she often saw the fire of his wrath arise, like a dark flame when clouds of smoke surround it.

THREE days the heroes feasted. On the fourth they pursued the chase on the heath of Luina. The maid followed at a distance, like

* Who this Gaul was is not certain. the poem of Gael the son of Morni, and He is probably the same with him who begins with speaks in that dialogue often foisted into

A righblin is binne ceol,
Ghais ga malda 's na gabh bron, &c.

a youth from the land of strangers. She followed to tell the words of fear, that Garno might leave the land *.

THE sun looked down on the fields, from beyond the midst of his course, and the panting roes still lay in the shade of the rock. Garno sat on Caba's rugged top. His quiver is by his side, and Luchos lies at his feet. Beside him is the bow with the head of horn, unstrung. He looks round for the deer; he sees a youth. "Whence are thy steps," said the dark-brow'd chief; "and where is the place to which thou art bound?"—

"I AM," replied the youth, "from the mighty Duaran, chief of the halls of Comara. He loves the daughter of Moran; but he heard that Garno wooed his love. He heard it, and sent me to bid thee yield the fair; or feel, this night, the strength of his arm in battle."

"TELL that proud son of the sea, that Garno will never yield. My arm is strong as the oak of Malla, and my steel knows the road through the breast of heroes. To Gaul alone, of all the youths on the hill, I yield the right-hand in battle, since he slew the boar that broke my spear on Elda.—Bid Duaran fly to his land: bid him retire from the daughter of Moran."

"BUT thou hast not seen Duaran," said the youth. "His stature is like an oak; his strength as the thunder that rolls thro' heaven; and his sword as the lightning that blasts the affrighted groves. Fly to thy land, lest it leave thy withered branches low, and strew on the heath thy blue arms."

"FLY thou, and tell Duaran I meet him.—Ferarma, bring me my shield

* For most of this and the two following paragraphs, we are more indebted to the tale than to the poem, which is defective.

shield and spear: bring me my fword, that stream of light.—What mean these two angry ghosts that fight in air!—The thin blood runs down their robes of mist; and their half-formed swords, like faint meteors, fall on sky-blue shields.—Now they embrace like friends. The sweeping blast passes through their airy limbs. They vanish. I do not love the sign; but I do not fear it. Fe-
arma, bring my arms.”

THE maid retires. She is grieved that Garno will not fly. But she heard him say that to Gaul he yielded in battle. To the hill of his chafe are therefore her steps.—The hero leans on his spear: a branchy deer lies by his side, and his dogs are panting around. His looks are towards the green dwelling of Luina. His thoughts are of his lovely Annir; and his voice is heard in her praise.

“ FAIR is my love as the bow of heaven: her robe is like the beam of the morning. Mild is the blushing of thy face, O Annir, as that sun, when he looks through the red-tinged clouds of the west, and the green tops of the mountains smile. O that I saw thee on the hill of deer, in all thy beauty; that I saw thee like the young pine in the vale of Luina, when it softly waves its head in the gale, and its glittering leaves grow in the shower of the sun!—Then would my soul rejoice as the roe, when he bounds over the heath in his speed; for lovely art thou in the eye of Gaul, thou daughter of car-borne * Moran!”

“ AND

* Ait mar eillid an aonaich,
Na deann air raon nan rua 'bhoc,
Thia m' anam fein, tra chi mi do dhreach,
Ingehan Mhorain nan each 's nan crrbad.

Car-borne is always a title of distinction in the poems of Ossian. That the ancient Britons and Caledonians used cars

and chariots of various kinds, is a fact so well attested by Tacitus, Mela, Cæsar, and other authors of credit, that none has room to ask, Where could they drive them? Their chariots of war were generally armed with scythes, and called *cobb'ain*,

“ **AN**D art thou Gaul,” said the approaching youth? “ Thy Annir may be lovely, son of Ardan; but dire is the battle thou must fight. Duaran loves the maid: on that hill he awaits thy coming. Yield, Gaul, thy love to Duaran.”

“ My love I will yield to none. But tell thou that chief to come to the feast to-night. To-morrow he shall carry away the gift of a friend, or feel the strength of a foe.”

“ **THOU** mayst spread the feast but thou must eat it alone, for Duaran comes only to lift the spear. Already I see his distant steps. He stalks like a ghost on that dusky heath. The beam of his steel supplies the departing light; and the clouds brighten their dark-brown sides around him. Hark! he strikes his shield. Its sound is the death of heroes.”

GAUL covered himself with his arms, like a ghost that clothes his dark limbs with meteors of light, when the mountain-heads are shaking in thunder. He moved to the hill from which he heard the sign of battle. As he went he hummed a careless song. He thought of his Annir, and the deeds of his former days.

HERE, son of youth, the warriors met. Each thought his foe was Duaran: for night was dark on the hills, and this oak concealed the sky. Dreadful was the wrath of the heroes; dreadful was

cobbain, (the *covinus* of the Latin writers), from *co-bhuain*, a word which signifies “ to hew down on all sides.” Of this kind seems to have been the famous car of Cuthullin in the 1st B. of Fingal, and the 4000 which Cæsar ascribes to Cassibelanus.---Besides this, the ancient

Caledonians, as they inhabited a mountainous and uneven country, used for state a sort of litter borne between two horses in a line, and somewhat in the shape of a bier. Hence, in Galic, the word *carbad* is used either to denote “ a bier” or “ a chariot.”

was the echo of their swords, as they mixed on high, like streams of lightning, when they issue from dark clouds of many folds *. The hills reply to their shields. Luina trembles, with all its woods. The heath shakes its head; the roes are afraid in their dreams; they think the chase is already up, and the thought of their sleep is of danger.—Still louder grows the noise in their ear; they think the approach of the hounds and the twang of the bow are nearer. From their midnight slumber they start; their face is towards the desert.

TERRIBLE and long was the strife of battle.—But the shield of Gaul is cleft in twain: and the blade of Garno flies in broken pieces. Its sound is like the whirlwind on Ardven, when it tears the heath from its roots, and rustles through the leafy oak.

GAUL stands like a whale, which the blue waves have left bare upon a rock. Garno, like the return of a stormy wave, rushes on to grasp the chief. Around each other they clasp their sinewy arms; like two contending spirits of heaven, when all the storms are awake. The rocking hills shrink with fear from the thunder of the sons of the sky; and the groves are blasted with their lightning.—Thus from side to side the warriors bound. Rocks with their earth and moss fly from their heels. Blood, mixt with sweat, descends in streams to the ground. It wanders through the green grass, and dyes the passing rill.

ALL

* Another edition of the poem describes this combat somewhat differently, but with almost equal energy, in the following lines;

Ebhail iad ann sin air a cheile,
Gu cruaidh cuireach is do-bheumach,

Chaidh an leirg air chrith fui'n easaibh,
'S chaidh teine da'n armabhl glafa.
Rhnailleadh iad gu neart'ar dobbhidh
Mar dha-bhuiinne ri cruaidh cho'rag,
Cho-shreagair na creagan 'fha beannтай?
Do airm nan Curine calma.

ALL night they fought. With morning light the son of Ardan falls on earth, and his wide wound is exposed to day. The helmet falls from his face. Garno knows his friend. Speechless and pale he stands, like the blasted oak, which the lightning struck on Mora in other years. The broad wound in his own breast is forgot. The red current flows unperceived. He falls beside his friend.

“ BLESSED,” he said, “ be the hand that gave the wound ! My body, O Gaul, shall rest with thine, and our souls shall ride on the same fair-skirted cloud. Our fathers see us come : they open the broad gate of mist : they bend to hail their sons, and a thousand other spirits are in their course. We come, mighty ghosts ; but ask not how your children fell. Why should you know that we fought, as if we had been foes ? Enough that you know your sons were brave. But why have we fought together ; why have I heard the name of Duaran ?”

GAUL heard the voice of his friend. But the shades of death are on his eyes : they see but dimly half the light. “ Why did I fight,” he faintly said, “ with Garno ; why did I wound my friend ; why did I hear of Duaran ? O that Annir were near to raise the gray-stone of my tomb !—Bend down, my fathers, from your airy halls, to meet me !” His words were heard no more. Cold and pale in his blood he sunk.

ANNIR came. Trembling were her steps : wild were her looks : distracted were her words. “ Why fled not Garno ? why fell my Gaul ? Why was heard the name of Duaran ?” The bow dropped from her hand : the shield fell from her breast. Garno saw her, but turned away his eye. In silence he fell asleep.—She
came

came to her lovely Gaul. She fell upon his clay-cold corse. There the fair, unhappy mourner was found ; but she would not be torn from her love.

ALL day, the sun, as he travelled through his watery cloud, beheld her grief. All night, the ghosts of rocks faintly answered to her sigh. On the second day her eyes were closed. Death came, like the calm cloud of sleep, when the hunter is tired upon his hill, and the silence of mist, without any wind, is around him.

Two days the father of Annir looked towards the heatli : two sleepless nights he listened to all the winds. “ Give me,” on this morning he said, “ my staff. My steps will be towards the desart.” —A gray dog howls before him: a fair ghost hovers on the heath. The aged lifts his tearful eye ; mournful he spies the lovely form. —But, Moran, I will leave thee ; I cannot stay to behold thy grief †.

* * * * *

HERE, son of youth, we laid the three. Here we reared their gray stones. Our sorrow was great for their fall ; and our bards gave the mournful song.

“ WHO, from the dusky hill with his armour of light ; who stalks so stately over the plain ; who strides in terrors over the heath ; who rushes into danger and defies the brave ? Who is it but Garno the bold ; Garno of the awful brow : the chief of spears ; the terror of the field ; the strength of a thousand streams ?

“ BUT who meets him, with stately steps and yellow locks ? Like

F f

the

† Some editions enlarge here upon though very tender, appears either to be Moran’s extreme grief on learning the not genuine, or not correct, it is omitted. death of his daughter ; but as the passage,

the fun, when he looks through a thin watery cloud, he smiles in the hour of danger. Who rolls before him the storm of battle, and thunders through its wide-skirted fields?—Hark! his voice is the sound of waves in a storm; his steps like the shattered rocks, when hills shake their heads on the heath of the desert.—It is Gaul of the fair hair and mild look; the son of Ardan of renowned deeds: the chief is mighty, but lovely.—O why was the name of Duaran ever heard, or the maid of Luina ever loved? Why fought two such friends in darkness?—Like angry ghosts in a storm, ye fought; like two green oaks, laid low by the storm of angry ghosts, ye fell.—The traveller passed by in the night; he saw them raise their lofty heads in the plain. ‘ Fair trees,’ he said, ‘ your growth is stately, and your leaf, on the bank of your own blue stream, is lovely! ’—But he returns in the morning, and finds their green heads low; he sees their roots torn from the earth, and their branches in the foam of the stream.—The tear starts into his eye. ‘ Each of us,’ he says, ‘ will one day fall before the storm.’

“ Low are your heads beneath the storm of night, ye warriors who were lately so brave! And pale is thy beauty, lovely Annir, in the place of thy silent repose! Mark, O maids of Morven’s streams, the day whereon the lovers fell. Let it be a day of sadness on Luina. Let no youth, on that day, pursue the dark-brown deer.

“ O GARNO, warrior bold! Gaul, thou lovely hero! and Annir, fair and unhappy!—Whether you ride on the silent clouds, or turn the course of the tempest; whether you rest in the peaceful halls of your fathers; visit the cloud-robed hills of Morven, or haunt

the

the green groves of Luina :—O let your love, your grief, and your wounds, be forgot ; and listen with joy to your fame in the song.—While harps remain, they will repeat your name ; and the last voice of bards shall praise you.”

SUCH was the song of the bards when we reared the tomb of the heroes. Often I sung it in our halls, when the dark day of their fall returned.

I HEAR the murmuring of the brook : I hear its fall over the rock : lead me back, son of youth, but forget not the fame of the heroes.

C A T H U L A*:

A P O E M.

THE ARGUMENT.

CATHULA king of Inistore, having invited Fingal to a feast in his palace of Carric-thura, receives intelligence, at the time, of an intended invasion on his coast. Fingal removes his anxiety on that head, by reminding him of the fame of their fathers; which they would transmit, he said, to their children. Upon this Cathula laments his misfortune, in having lost, as he supposed, his only son, when a child. The bard relates in what manner; and Fingal comforts Cathula, by telling him his son may, possibly, be still alive.—

BEING informed in the morning, that Manos, a chief of Lochlin, had actually landed, they go forth to give him battle. The command is devolved upon three of their young warriors; but as they were like to be worsted, Fingal, Connal, and Cathula descend to their aid. The last, with some misgivings, encounters with a youth, whom he afterwards discovers to be his son.—

MANOS, being overcome, is reprimanded by Fingal, and dismissed on a promise of his never giving any further trouble to Fingal or any of his friends.—The poem is addressed to a *Dweller of the rock*; either a fequestered Culdee, or Druid.

OUR life is like the sun-beam of winter, that flies, between the showers, over the heath of Lena. The hunter, lifting his head upon his hill, beholds the beam, and hails the day of the sun.

He

* From the resemblance between the names of Cathula and Cuthullin, and both having a son called Conloch, many who repeat this poem, in place of Cathula, substitute the more familiar name of Cuthullin, and call the poem by the title of "Mar mharbh Cuthullin a Mhac?"—tho'

it appears that Cuthullin died under the age of thirty, when his son was very young; and the other circumstances of the poem can relate only to the king of Inistore.—See Ossian's poems of *Carric-thura* and *Death of Cuthullin*. The edition here followed begins thus:

Marv

He hails it ; but it is already gone. The dun-robed clouds have drawn their shade over its path, and who can trace its footsteps? The leafless woods lament its departure ; their branches sigh to every breeze ; and the drooping herbs of the mountain wither.

THE sun, O woods, shall again return ; and your green leaves, in his warm beam, will flourish. The season of your youth will come back, and all your bare boughs will rejoice. From the height of his beauty, the dweller of heaven will look down : he will smile through the thin sparkling shower, on the herbs that are withered. They also will come forth from their winter-house, and lift their green glittering head on the bank of their secret stream.—They will come forth from their dark house, with joy : but the dwellers of the tomb remain still in their place ; no warm beam of the sun shall revive them.—But your memory, companions of my fame, shall remain ; your deeds shall descend, a beam of light to future times, and be the tale of the years that shall come.—Hear, dweller of the rock, the tale of Inistore. Dim-gleaming, it comes on the soul of the bard. It comes like a faint moon-beam on the distant wave, when Lumon † fears the storm.

THE feast of Cathula was prepared, and Fingal raised the sail. The wind came down with its rushing noise from our mountains. Beneath its steps is the groan of oaks. On the deep is the roar of waves.

Mar bhoisge greine 's a gheamhra'
'S e ruith na dheann air raon Lea'na;
'S amhul sin la'ith nam Fiann
Mar ghrian eigidh-fhraeach a' treigfin.
Dh'aom neoil chiar-dhu' nan speur,
'S bhuiu iad an deo aoiibhin on t sealgar :
Tha loma gheuga na coill a' caoidh,
'S mao' lusfrach an t fleibh a' feurga'
Ach pilidh fathaidh a ghrian

Ri doirre sgiamhach nan geug ur,
'Sni gach crann 'sa cheituin gaire
'G amharc ann aird ri mac nan speur, &c.

As several parts of this poem are supplied from the tale or *fgeulachd*, the narration is more prolix than it is in the general run of old Galic poems.

† Lumon ; the name of a bay.

waves. Inistore †, dweller of the sea of whales, lifts through the low-hung clouds its green head, and beholds with joy our coming. The people spy our sails through mist, and gladness is in Carric-thura.

BUT who are these with the king, descending to the shore to meet us? One tall tree is gray; the other two young oaks are green, but their steps are stately.---Hail, Connal, from blue Togorma *, is it thou! Hail, yellow son of Rinama †, king of plains! And hail, thou son of Ruro, from the isle of boars!

“ Let the feast,” said Cathula, “ be spread, and the shell go round. Let the voice of harps and the songs of bards arise, that the joy of my friends may be great in my echoing halls. Cathula, O bards, is in the midst of his friends. This is the day of his joy. Let no shade obscure its beams; let no dark cloud, in its wandering course, pass over Carric-thura !”

SUCH were the words of Cathula. But how short, son of the troubled days §, is the dream of thy joy! It is like the short calm that comes between the inconstant blasts, in the night of the storm. The hunter lays down his head in his booth. His dreams of joy are beginning to arise: white-handed virgins are coming towards him with their harps: bards are beginning to give his fame to the song: shields sound, and his heart bounds with joy for the

battle :

† Inistore, properly *Innis-orc*, or *Orc-innis*, “ the isles of whales,” or Orkneys. The word *orc* is used in this sense by Milton:

— an island salt and bare,
The haunt of seals and *ores* and sea-mews clang.

* *Tonn-gorma*; “ the isle of blue waves.”

† *Ri' na ma*, “ king of the plains,” or Maiatae. The Highlanders still call the low parts of Scotland *a mba'-thir*, the plain country.

§ In this apostrophe the poet does not mean Cathula only, but man in general, whose chequered life he describes thro' the whole of this beautiful paragraph.

battle : fields of faine rise before him ; and he beholds, at times, the gleam of a thousand spears.---But the blast, in the midst of this gladness, comes. It shakes above the booth its terrible wing, and the dreams of joy vanish. The hunter lifts his head amidst the storm, and says, " Dreams of my love, why are you gone ! or why did you come to deceive me ?"---The virgins were of clouds ! the voice of bards was but the wind of the heath ! the sound of the battle was the thunder ; and the light of spears the flame of heaven !

HUNTER of the heath, thy dream was short, but pleasant : and such a dream was thy joy, O Cathula !

THE feast of Inistore had ceased. The blaze of the oak was past its strength. Still, the heroes hear the song around it ; while Cathula views the night.

" THE sleeping sea is calm †. The sparkling stars bend over it in the west. They admire, in its smooth face, their own beauteous form. They are like the young virgins, when they lean on the brink of their secret stream, and behold, with a smile, the shade of their beauty. A rustling comes as, bent, they lie. They start. They look, confused, around. They see it is but the roe in the withered leaf ; but the blush is on their face of love.---Some of the stars are likewise seen to blush ; it is the sign of blood, I fear.---But I will behold the face of the moon. She begins to lift, through trees, her half-unveiled head. Dim forms are on her beams. I perceive their limbs of smoke.---I know thee, my father, in thy darkened mist. But tell me why stirrest thou the leaf with thy sigh ?"

THE answer came only by halves to his ear. The wandering
breeze,

† Cathula speaks.

breeze, in its fold, had rolled the other half away. He returns to the hall, but his face is sad. Fingal knew he had seen his fathers ; and his were always the words of hope. His speech was like the sound of the harp, when the white-handed daughter of Toscar holds it.

“ IN the dark years that have passed, a silent stream, to their own sea, our fathers trod together in the path of fame. Sarno, Colgar, and Comhal, were three lights that shone in every danger. The battle was rolled before them, as the dark, dusty cloud by the whirlwind’s blast, when some angry ghost sweeps it along the narrow vale. In broken columns it flies : it sinks behind the shelter of the woods, and hides its head in the moss of the desert.—The spirit careles rides through air, and pursues some other sport. —Thus strode the warriors. No concern was theirs in the day of danger. Thus they broke the ranks of Lochlin, when its hosts opposed them. And are not we their sons, Cathula ; and shall our face be dark when dangers come ? Our fathers would turn away their course upon their blast ; no voice of theirs would descend into our dreams ; nor would their hall open to receive our feeble spirit, when our gray head would fall, like the withered leaf in the unknown vale. We should fly, the sport of winds, in the dim, fenny mist of Lego.—No ; chiefs of Togorma and Inistore, our fathers have left us their fame ; and the mighty stream, increased with our renown, shall, like growing Lubar*, roll down to our children.”

“ AND long,” said Cathula, “ may the sons of Fingal rejoice in their father’s fame. May they brighten in its beams, in the

G g

dark

* *Lubar*, “ a winding river ;” often mentioned in the old Galic poems.

dark ages to come, and the bard say in his song, ‘ He is of the race of Fingal.’—But to no son of mine shall my renown descend, a bright beam, to shine around him. Conloch, son of my love! that sad night, which tore thy mother and thyself at once from my arms, rises with all its stormy horrors in my view, and wounds afresh my soul. It rises before me like the sea of Inistore in that night of storms. The rocks hear the noise of its waves, and they shake, with all their woods. The spirit of the mountain roars along the fall of streams; and the dweller of Inistore fears his trembling isle may sink.—But grief stops the voice of Cathula. His soul is a stream that melts, when tender thoughts are warm within.—Let me hear the sad tale, O bard, from thee. It awakes my grief; but I love it.”

* * * * *

I HEAR the din of arms in Icroma †. I hear, through its woods, the echo of shields. I see the blaze of swords, gleaming to the moon. I see the spear of battle lifted. The roe starts from his midnight rest, and Turlèthan * fears the danger.—But why art thou afraid, roe of the mountain? Why tremblest thou, Sgaro, in thy halls? Sora’s king is strong, but the wind of the north is awake. Upon its cloudy wing Cathula comes, like a red angry ghost of night, when hunters tremble on Stùca. The

ranks

† *I-croma*, “ winding or crooked isle.” The poem, which in this place is not entire, brings Cathula very abruptly to Icroma, in order to assist Sgaro; but the tales or *ursegeals* mention several previous circumstances, which it might be tedious, and not essential, to mention.—With the confusion and terror that attend war, as

described in this paragraph, the calm joy of peace is happily contrasted in that which follows. The narration of this expedition seems to be put in the mouth of Cathula’s bard.

* *Tur-leathan*, “ broad tower;” the name of Sgaro’s palace in Icroma.

† This

ranks of war are broken before him, as the mail of the spider before the blast. The mighty are scattered in his presence.—Sora, with the clouds of night, hath fled over the sea. He hath disappeared, as the path of his ship on the deep.—Sgaro, hang up thy shield ; bring down thy harp ; let the daughters of Icroma rejoice.

I HEAR the voice of songs in Icroma. I hear the echo of harps in its halls. The sword of war is sheathed. The shield is hung on the peaceful wall, a dark orb, like the inner moon ; and the spear of battle rests beside it. The roe is glad on his rock. The virgins of Turlethan look, with joy, over their window. The sun shines bright. No cloud is on its beams. But the maids observe it not ; their eye is on Cathula, moving in the light of his steel. They bless that beam of brightness, from whose presence the darkness of their danger retired. “ Awake, our voice,” they say ; “ awake, our harps : let our song be Caric-thura’s king † !”

BUT who comes forth to meet the chief ? Her steps are on the dew of the morning. The tear of joy hangs forward in her eye, like the tear of night on the bended grafts, when it glitters in early sun-beams. Her face of beauty is half-concealed by the wandering of her fair locks. But the morning-beams look through them on the mild-blushing of her cheeks, as looks the sun on the budding rose, when its colour grows in the drops of dew.—Who can this be but Rofgala, the fairest of the maids

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† This, of the maids of Icroma, appears to have been a chorus-song ; a species of composition very ancient, and still much used in the Highlands. The time of these pieces is adapted to the va-

rious exercises of rowing, reaping, ful-
ling, &c. They greatly alleviate the
toil, and inspire men with ardour to go
through with it.

of Icroma?—Sgaro gives her to the chief who scattered the cloud of his foes.—“Cathula, were ten daughters mine, Chief of heroes, I would say, be thine the choice.”

THREE years, on their eagle-wing, flew over the hills of Turléthan. The hawk darting on his prey moves not with a pace so silent or swift. Cathula looks back on their course, as the awakened hunter on the space he travelled over in his dream. He wonders how soon they are past. “It is time to return to Inistore; to the streamy groves of Carric-thura.”

THE sails of Cathula are raised. Rosgala, by turns, is glad and sad. “Adieu, thou isle of my love; adieu, thou abode of my youth! My friends are on the shore: the roes look forward from their bushy rock.—But why should the tears of Rosgala flow? she goes with Carric-thura’s chief?”—Conloch, the young pledge of their love, is in her arms. Two streaks of light on a cloud are his fair brows. His little helm above them is of the fur of fawns. Lulled by the rocking of the waves, he sleeps. In the dreams of his rest, he smiles. He hears the buzz of mountain-bees, and thinks he is near their store of sweet. But it is not the buzzing bee, thou dost hear, O Conloch! it is the rising wind, whistling through the rattling shrouds.—But still thy smile is pleasant. Thou lookest like the flower of Lena, when the many-coloured rainbow adorns it in the day of the inconstant sun. The hunter, as, hastening to the shelter of some dark-bending rock, he strides along, beholds it with a sigh; for he sees the stormy shower, riding towards it on the blast: The pillars that support it are hail. “Flower of Lena, thou art lovely; but the tread of the storm is near thee.”

THE breast of Rosgala heaves under the broken sigh, white as the

the foam of the wave, when the storm uplifts it, and darkness dwells around. The bright drop is in her eye; it falls on the face of Conloch. With the pressing of her lip, she wipes it away. He awakes and sees the storm. He wonders what it means; and, shrinking, clings to the bosom of Rosgala. She, over him, spreads her skirt, as spreads the eagle of Lora her dark wings, wide, over her young, when they shrink in their head from the hail, and hear the voice of storms.—“ Fear not, child of my love,” said Rosgala; “ for thy father is nigh us.”—Nor be thou thyself afraid, said Cathula; I know the sea of Inistore. Often have I rode its deep, when louder was the roar of its waves.—Rosgala asks for Inistore; but it is distant. The sea hides it behind its hills of foam.—Mixed with the noise of waves, rise, at times, the sighs of the fair.

Now descends, on the deep, dark-skirted night. The thunder is in her course. The streamy lightning bursts, dark-red, from her womb. Spirits feel its flames. Their shrieks are heard in mid-air. They rush to quench their half-burnt robes in the deep. The billows roar, with all their whales.—The moon hears the noise within her house of clouds, and she is afraid to lift her head above the hill. The stars wrap their heads in their mantle of Lano’s mist *. At times, they look, trembling, through the window of their clouds; but, quick, draw back their wandering hair.—They are like the hunter on the heath, who shoots out, at times, his head, but will not venture forth from his booth till the storm is.

* *The mist of Lano* seems to have been a proverb for any mist of the thickest and darkest kind.

is over.—Hunter of the roe of the mountain, thou art on the heath on shore ; O that Rosgala were there !

BUT what voice did you hear that night, ye rocks of Icroma ; when on the deep was she, to whose harp you often echoed ? Did you listen to the roar of waves at your feet, or to the thunder that rolled in the blasted head of your pines ? Louder than either of these, rose in your ear the cries of Sulingorma †. She is wildly-fad, for her daughter is on the deep with her child. She stands on the dark rock, careless of the beating storm. White billows breaking on the distant deep, deceive her oft for fails.—Mother of Rosgala, retire from the storm of night ; thy daughter does not hear thy cries.

RETIRING, she soon turns back to view once more the main. A wandering bark, descending into the creek, is half-perceived. Oh ! art thou safe, my child !”

“ WHAT voice is that on the rock ?” says the mariner ; “ my mates take down the fails.”

THE voice of joy mixed with fear again is up : “ Rosgala ! art thou safe ?”

“ It is the cry,” says the mariner, “ of the fair ghost that we saw upon the deep : behold it there !—Come, O ghost, on moon-beams to our dreams, when the night is calm, and the storm is over !”

SULINGORMA hears his voice, and sad retires. The rocks reply to the name of Rosgala.

BUT Rosgala is on the sea of Inistore. The straggling ray of a

di-

† *Sulin-gorma* signifies “ blue eyes ;” *Rosgala*, “ fair countenance ;” *Cathula*, “ eye of battle ;” *Conloch*, (or *Ciun-laoch*), “ mild or beautiful hero.”

distant oak travels there over the deep. Cathula beheld his love, like a fair virgin-ghost in its beam. In her arms he beheld his son. He looked like a star in the bosom of the bended moon, when her face is almost hid in grief, and the darkness of her countenance growing. He beheld them; but he was sad, and his half-stifled sigh arose. The passing breeze bore it to the ear of Rosgala.

“ *WHY* that sigh,” she said, “ *my love?* The night on the deep is dark, but the storm will soon be over. The moon will come forth in her silent beauty; her steps on the mountain will be lovely. The stars will shew their blue-sparkling eyes in the clouds, and the winds will retire from the sea of Inistore. Nor is Inistore far distant: is not that the light of its halls?”

“ *LIGHT* of the soul of Cathula, the storm will soon be past; and the light of Inistore, amidst blue, calm waves, arise. But what is night, or storm, or distance of Inistore, to Cathula; while he beholds the face of beauty, with all thy calm of soul?—Let me behold the face of my love, O beam! and I will bless thee, tho’ thou dost come from Sora’s hall; though thou hast brought me so nigh his shelving rocks.”

Too nigh them art thou brought indeed, O Cathula: on their edge thy skiff, in two, is divided. The chief climbs the oozy rock. Rosgala and his son are in his arms. But no shelter, save from cold sea-weeds, is there. It is, at times, the habitation of seals.

“ *THE* land, my love, is nigh. My strength, I know, can reach it. On its shore I may find some boat that shall convey us from Sora’s wrath *, before the light shall arise. Rest thou here, Rosgala.

* The situation of Cathula was the more alarming, as he had formerly incurred the displeasure of the king of Sora, by assisting Sgaro against him.

gala. The storm is lower. The stars look over the edge of their broken clouds, and the moon lifts her pale head through the distant tree. They will soon shew thee the path of my return. Rest here, my love, Rosgala!—Ye lights of heaven, shine on my love; ye spirits on their beams, dwell with her on her rock. When you hear her say, ‘Cathula, what delays thy return?’ tell her you behold the steps of my coming.

“COME, thou mayest,” said Rosgala; “but ah! I fear the bil-low’s roar. Some blast may raise it high; or some angry ghost may, again, embroil it in his course. But thou shalt come, my love: and yet I fear.—The sea may grow; the shades may depart; or Sora awake ere thou dost come. But no; my love shall return soon. Spirits of my fathers! guard Cathula.”

HE went; he reached the shore: but no boat is nigh. He runs in search of it far. The thought of his soul is on the oozy rock with Rosgala.

WHAT shall that helpless mourner do?—Her eye is towards the darkly shore; but no Cathula comes. The waves grow upon her rock. They gather about her feet. But, Conloch, thou art not wet; thou art lifted high in her arms.

“WHAT detains thee, my love? Have the waves stopped thy course to the shore; or have the boats of Sora been distant far?—O that thou wert ashore, my child! ’Tis for thee that trembles thus the soul of Rosgala.”

SHE ties him on Cathula’s shield. A withered tree comes, wan-dering on the wave, to her rock. On its top she fixes Conloch.

SHALL I awake thee, Conloch? No, thy cries would pierce my soul, like darts. Safe thou mayest reach the shore; and So-ra’s

ra's king may have pity. Or, thy father perhaps may find thee. But ah! my child, thy father I fear is not. On that cloud his spirit waits for mine.—Stay, Cathula; thy love is coming.

A HIGHER surge comes, white-tumbling, over the rock. In its cold bosom it folds Rosgala. “ Farewel, O my Conloch !”

Too late, Cathula comes in the boat of Sora. He looks for the rock: but no rock, dark-rising above the wave, is seen.—“ The growing sea hath covered its oozy top ! No Rosgala ; no Conloch is here ! O that the same wave had inclosed Cathula ! Then, Rosgala, would we smile in death ; Conloch we would clasp in our arms ; his tender frame should not be hurt by rocks.—Shall Cathula die or live ?”

THE light, half-mixt with darkness, breaks on Sora's hills. A small isle is near. A watery cave is under its rock ; and over its mouth there bends, in its own gray coat of moss, an aged oak. Five generations saw the ocean shrink and grow since this oak had given the king of Sora shelter. In the cave below it he once hid his spouse, as he moved to war. ‘ To-morrow,’ he said, ‘ I return, and bring the head of Lanfadda.’ He went ; the spear of Lanfadda travelled through his side, and forbade to fulfil his promise. Two days, with their nights, returned. But no word of thy return, red-haired Ulan-orchul. Oi-dana is sad in her cave. Her dark hair wanders on winds ; and her white hands beat, like foamy waves, her breast.—Mournful through night is her voice of grief. The mariner hears it as he passes by. He turns to see if it may be the music of a spirit of the deep. And thus was discovered the

secret cave.—It is here Cathula waits for night. It comes with all its stars. Rosgala descends on the soul of her love. She comes, soft-gliding on the face of the deep. Her robe is of the white mist that rises on Cona, when morning-dews are melting in the beams of the sun. But her tresses still are wet: they drop like the dew of roses on the bank of their flow-rolling river.—She tells him of her fate; she tells him how she laid Conloch on his shield. ‘ But let Cathula,’ she says, ‘ awake, and fly safe to Inistore.’

He rose. In silent grief over the waves he came. But since, he is often sad. His tears in the morning flow for Rosgala; and his sighs in the evening are heard for Conloch †.

GREAT, said the king of Morven, is the cause of Cathula’s grief. But Conloch perhaps may live. Thy shield may have carried him to the shore, and the people of Sora might have pity. “ He may one day,” they would say, “ lift this shield to defend us.” Yes, they may have spared him; and the warriors may one day say of him, “ His arm is like the arm of Cathula: his spear is like one of the spears of Morven.” Why then should darkness dwell on the soul of the mighty? Cathula is not alone when the clang of the shield arises.

THUS passed the night in Carric-thura’s halls. Gray morning at length arose in the east. His eyes are half open like the weary hunter on the heath when he is scarce awake. Dark waves begin to roll in light. Hill’s left half their head in day. Stars hide in caves their dim heads; for they see the son of the morning lift his yellow head behind his hill, and looking, with his broad eye, farther than

† Here Cathula’s bard ends his narration.

than ever travelled the restless kings of the world †. They see him, and retire from his presence; as the daughters of strangers when they see Malvina.

NOR did the beams of the sun, that day, bring gladness to the scout of Inistore. From the height of his rock he looks on the sea. Dark ships are on the shore. Like bees issuing from the trunk of their oak, when the sun is on the vale of flowers, they pour on the beach their men. The steps of his return are quick. “ Cathula! Lochlin is on thy shore.”

AND let them come, said Cathula; for my friends are nigh. But why didst thou not see them sooner? Why, O sun, didst thou not sooner rise?—But perhaps thou hast been hearing the tale of wo, like Cathula; or mourning for thy spouse and son.—Yes, great light, for thou movest in thy blue field alone: no beam, like thyself, attends thee in the glory of thy course. Thy spouse has been torn from thy side in heaven, by the storm: thy son has been torn from thee, as, some night, thou hast been travelling through the troubled deep *. Yes, fair light, thou hast met in thy course such a night as seized Cathula; and thou art now the husband of no spouse; the father of no Conloch.—Yet thy grief is only for a season. Thou movest forth in the steps of thy majesty, and thy dark foes vanish. The spirits that spread death over the plains in thy absence, hide themselves in the caves of the mountains when thou dost come.—So shall the fame of Cathula, in the interval of

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† When the ancient Galic poets use this expression, they are supposed to mean by it the Roman emperors.

* The mind, when under the influence of any strong emotion or passion, is apt

to assimilate every other object to its own situation. This figure, when properly used, has a fine effect, as we are pleased to see life and sentiment ascribed to inanimate objects.

his grief, arise. No cloud of sorrow shall hide the battle from his sight. His soul shall grow like a mountain-stream when its course is straitened; it shall swell in danger like a flood, when dark rocks oppose it.

THE shield of Inistore was struck. Connal took his spear; and the hand of Fingal is on the blade of Luno.—The standard of Rinema streams, like a rainbow, in air: the son of Ruro and myself stand like two pillars of summer's fultry cloud: they are fair without; but they hide the lightning in their fold, and the roar of the thunder is around.

As a storm of hail comes rushing over ocean*, and drives the surge before it, till it breaks its force against the scaly side of a whale or oozy isle; or as the spirit in the storm lifts the white billows in his wrath, and heaves them, with all their foam, hoarse-roaring over a rock; so rushed our hosts, in all their terrors, to meet the war.—We saw the crowded ranks of Lochlin gathered around Manos, like flights of sea-fowl round their own rock. Its dark sides are covered with their thronging wings; but its head rises, with all its shaggy brows, above them, and shrinks not at the roar of the coming storm.

IT was then Fingal spoke to Connal, and to the chief of Inistore. All the youths blessed the king of Morvan, as they listened to his words.

“ OUR names, chiefs of the battles of the spear, are already in
the

* In the original, this passage is no less terrible than the scene which it describes.

Mar stóirm ghaileach mheallain
Na stéud-ruith thairis air cuantaidh,
A' fguaba' nan tonna stuadhach,
‘S gáin bualá' ri † uehd nan ard-bheann;

† al. *biajta gabhuidh.*

—No mar spiorad na doininn a' feidé
Nam beanntaí eit' faile
Le'n cobhar ceann-ghlas, a' stairirich
Measg charraige crusaigh a' ganraich;
—B' amhail sin farum ar feachd
Dol an cinnfeal gleachd do'n arach.

the song, while others want their fame. Let the sons of youth have the honour of the battle of Inistore. We stand on the hill, rocks ready to rush into the vale, if they need our aid."

THE hand of Ogan is on his sword: the son of Ruro half-exalts his spear; and the eye of Ossian is on Fingal.

I SEE, said the king, three chiefs before the three columns of Lochlin's spears. One shines a beam of light, perhaps, in the first of his battles. Nor is he of the weak in arms. Thine, Ossian, be the lot to contend with the chief; but quench not at once his fame. The tear, perhaps, is in the eye of his spouse; and his father may now be dim with years. No son beside, perhaps, has the aged chief: Ossian, spare the beam.—Thine, Ogan †, be that other dark leader of the war. "And mine," said the son of Ruro, "shall be Manos, king of spears."

THE kings remained upon their hills. Like three whales, with all their billows of foam, we rolled to battle. But the host of Manos withstood our assault, firm as the rock in the sea of Inistore. Whales strike against its sides, and waves climb up its face. But it remains fixed; all their force cannot move it.

NOR stood the sons of Lochlin harmless in their place, when the fury of the battle rose, and the strife was kindled by the songs of the bards*. Ogan is bound with a thousand thongs, and the son of Ruro shrinks back from the spear of Manos.—The young lifter

of

† Ogan: the name of Rinama's son.

* It was part of the office of the bards to animate the combatants by their songs during the action. The old Persian Magi are said to have done the same; and Ho-

mer alludes to the like custom in the time of the Trojan war:

—tho' the Grecian throng
With horror sounds the loud *Orthian song*:
The navy shakes; and at the dire alarms
Each bosom boils, each warrior starts to arms.

of the spear pressed upon Ossian. I defended myself from his strokes, but fought not his early fall.

“ Dost thou despise my youth, son of strength,” he said, as the big tear swelled in either eye; “ dost thou despise my youth, when thou dost not lift thy beamy spear? Shall I, all day, beat thy shield, as does the harmless boy a rock? Shall I reap no share of fame, while my friends hew down the ranks of war?—But I will elsewhere seek renown.”

His people followed him as he went, and my steps pursued him slowly behind. I saw the chiefs come down from their hills, like three mountain-streams when they leap, white, from rocks, and meet with all their earth, and stones, and trees, in some green vale below.—Manos meets the king of Morven, and the clang of their steel is terrible.—But who could stand before Fingal? The spear is wrested from the hand of Manos, and the thick thongs confine him. Connal stands in the place of Ogan; nor was his strength in battle small.

CATHULA met the beam of youth that fought with Ossian, as o'er the field he wandered in search of fame. His heart warmed to the stranger, as he saw him brightening before him in all the stately beauty of youth. What pity, said his soul to him, this light so soon should fail! “ Why, warrior of youth, shouldst thou so early fall, like a young tree in the vale? the summer breeze creeps thro' its blossoms, and spreads its fragrance on the fields around. Retire, son of youth, lest the maid of thy love should mourn. Retire, for her sake; that thou mayest fight thy future battles.”—“ But I will be famed in my first,” said the youth, as on he rushed.—“ Thou mayest,

mayest, in falling by the mighty," replied the chief, as he lifted on high his spear.

LIKE the force of two warring streams †, or two waves driven on by contrary winds, they fought. Like the breaking of those waves on the rock between was the sound of the shields of heroes. Their broken spears fly, glancing, through air; but their swords, like meteors wielded by two contending ghosts, are in their hands. The shield of the youth is pierced in the midst. The sword of Cathula passes through its folds. Nor stops it then. Its return is stained with blood; and the red stream follows it through the cleft in the shield.

As falls a green lofty pine by the mountain blast *, when the ax hath half cut it through, making the echoing rock start, and the earth tremble around; so falls the youth on his sounding arms. His foot is bathed in a little rill, and his blood is mixed with its gurgling stream.

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† The Galic language abounds in epithets, which give it often a peculiar energy that cannot always be transfused into a translation. Of this we have here a striking instance.

'N sin chuaidh iad an dail a cheile,
Mar dha bhuinne ri treun-cho'rag:
'S gach gaooth a' neartach an faothreach—
Builean bao'bhi', beucach, do'bhidh.
Gu cnidreachi, euidreamach, beumnach,
Bha na Trein mar thuinn tigh'n da thaobh,
Gan ruaga' le stoirm, toirt nuanan
Air carraig chruaidh meadhon-barach.

* The ancient Galic poets were peculiarly happy in their choice of similes. They always drew them from objects so striking and familiar, as to make a powerful impression on the fancy; while a cer-

tain combination of harmonic and corresponding sounds, peculiar to the Celtic poetry, took the firmest hold of the memory and ear. This liveliness of images, and arrangement of sounds, greatly contributed to the preservation of their poetry by oral tradition. It was probably with a view to facilitate this, that they used such a profusion of tropes, as may rather dazzle than please in a translation, while in the original they always charm. The comparison before us is both grand and beautiful.

Thuit e mar chrann-giuthais ard-ghom
Le gaoith-thfaicigh, thun a ghearraidh;
Le geilt thug a charraig fuaimeach;
Chriithich agus ghluais an talamh.

“ I fall †,” he said as the strife ceased along the plain, “ I fall in the first of my battles ; and my fame shall not be heard. But I fall by the mighty, and my name may remain, with his, in the song. ‘ It was the sword of Carric-thura’s king,’ the bard may say, ‘ that pierced the side of Anal ! I will hear thee, O bard, on my flying wind, and with joy I will ride on my cloud. Cathula, raise in this green spot my tomb. Place that gray stone at my head : but the son of future times will not know it. He will make it the bridge over some little stream which he cannot bound across. Some gray bard will miss it from its place, and say, ‘ Where is the stone of him that fell by Cathula?’ And thus my name may be heard.—O that thou hadst this sword, Annir of Sora ! thou wouldest shed over it a tear ; though without fame thy youth is fallen.—Cathula, hang that shield in thy hall. Though it did not defend me, I love it. Once it bore me on the stormy billows.”

HIS last words were darts of death to the soul of Cathula. He stood in his place, like the tree which is blasted by the lightning, for he knew the shield of his fathers. He falls on the face of his son.

OUR heroes gather around them. We stand, silent in our grief, like the pines of Gormla, when they behold the fall of their companions by

an

† In the original, this speech of Con-loch is very affecting, and has a melancholy tender cast which cannot be so easily conveyed into another language.

Thuit mis, ann tus na t eng-bboil ;

’S chor cirich mo chliu fan dan.

Ach thuit mi le lamh nam buadh,

’S biaidh luadh air mo ghaifge le chliu’fan.

—“ Si lann Rí” Inis-e-tore

A lot ’s an aráich an t Aineal.”

Beannachd do t anam, a bhsaird,

Clinneam fein gu h ard do ghuth,

’S biom ait a marcachd na fine,

’S glas-cheo na fri’ gam eide’.

—An leac ud ’san lonan uaine

Togaibh ahus aig mo cheann ;

Gus an lesgar thar fruthan faoin i,

’S an dean an t Aos-dan a h iontrain.

Ainnir Shora mo ghraidh !

Ged’ thuit ’san arach fo t annfachd,

Shille’ do dhoir gu bras

Nam faighe’ tu Ghaoil mo chloidhe.

A shuil cholgach nan dearg-chath

Crochs’ ad thalla mo chaomh-sgia ;

Sgia’ mo ghraidh (ged’rinn i mo leon)

Air ’n do shcol mi ro fleuda fail !

an angry spirit of night, that had laid their green heads low. We hear, at times, the broken words of Cathula, and echo to his grief with our sighs.

‘ AND art thou fallen, son of my love*! art thou fallen, Conloch, by thy father! Was it for this I unsheathed the sword? O that in thy place, my Conloch, I had been low! Let The man of wo be the name of Cathula! ’

FINGAL saw the grief of his friend, and long descended his tears in silence. At length he bade the tomb of Conloch rise, and the bards pour the mournful song. He bade the thongs be loosed from the hands of Manos; as thus he spoke to the king of spears.

“ Why, chief of Lochlin, dost thou delight in war? why dost thou deprive the warrior of his future fame; and bid his days, like that early-fallen flower, to cease in the midst? Why dost thou darken the days of the aged, and add sorrow to the burden of years, with which their gray head is already bended. Why dost thou cause the eye of the virgin to weep, and take pleasure in the tear of the orphan?---Are their sighs to thy ear as the music of harps, when thou dost bid them so often rise? Are their tears a stream to thy soul, when thirsty? Or canst thou smile, when they weep, because the pursuer of their deer on the mountain is fallen †?---Are

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not

* The original has here several lines which consist almost entirely of interjections. As this sort of natural language does not always admit of a translation, it will suffice to give the words in their Gaelic garb.

Och! is ochain! a mhic dhileis!
Gu dilinn cha duisg thu tuille!
Och! agus Och! nan Och eithre!
'S truagh gur mairloen mis ad'chlaigh!

† This image is beautifully pursued in

the following extract of a St Kilda lament. True poetry is confined to no time or place. It is the offspring of nature, and extends as wide as her dominions. It is the genuine language of every feeling of the human heart when strongly agitated by any emotion or passion.

“ Be hush'd, my tender babes! Your father will soon come with the spoil of the rock.—What detained thee, my love; why

not the thousand ills which grow on every heath, and which the son of the hunter is heir to, a sufficient toil to go through?---Why shouldest thou scatter more evils in his way, and strew his path with swords? Canst thou not walk the few steps to the tomb without treading in blood; may not the deer of thine own woods suffice thee?---Like that shadow, must thou fly unsettled over every field, though the squally wind, that shall scatter its dark mist, is so nigh it?---Behold the blood of Conloch: behold the grief of Cathula: and behold the sword of Luno.---But my sword, Manos, seeks not thy blood. Go; return to thy spouse, and pursue thy deer; but let thy ship bound no more towards Morven, or the stormy sea of Inistore."

" If it shall; then may this broad shield, by which my father swore, no longer defend the breast of Manos!---O that I had not done so much; for dear to my soul was he that is low!"

HE sailed in his dark ships on the wave. Mournful, we go with Carric-thura's chief. The steps of his silence were slow: and often, in the midst of his troubled sigh, he stood, and looked back on the tomb of his son.

MANOS:

why so long this day is thy absence? Hast thou forgot thy spouse and children of youth; thy sister of love, and mother of age? No: but perhaps the fowls have been shy, or scared away; or, ah me! perhaps the string has been weak, or the rock been slippery.---What detains thee, my love? I will look for thy return from this peak of the rock.

" I see none move through the gray cliffs.---But ah! who is that, dash'd at their foot by the waves? O! 'tis he; 'tis my love! he fell from their terrible height!

O my love! dost thou not hear; dost thou not pity the tears of thy spouse and orphans? Thy sister, too, calls; and thy mother, in all her feeble years, is sad. But thou hearest not; neither shalt thou any more arise!---My love, thou hast left us helpless indeed!---Our fishes from henceforth shall sport, safe, in their sea; our fowls shall roam, free, through their air: our eggs shall remain in the cleft of their rock.---He that could bring them home is gone! My love, thou hast left us forlorn indeed!"

M A N O S * :

A P O E M.

THE A R G U M E N T.

FINGAL, returning from his expedition to Inistore, mentioned in the preceding poem, finds an old man in great distress in Icola, a small desert isle. His story is told. Fingal and his men bring him with them, and promise to redress his wrongs. On their arrival on the coast of Morven, they find Manos, notwithstanding his promise, had taken advantage of their absence, and landed there before them. They offer him peace, which he rejects. After a ludicrous duel between two of their men, Fingal and Manos engage in single combat, in which the latter is worsted, and mortally wounded.---After the fight, Umad, the old man who had been found in the cave, meets unexpectedly with his daughter, and obtains relief from Fingal.---The poet begins this piece with an address to his harp.

DESCEND from thy place, mournful harp of Cona; descend, thou dweller between the dark-crusted shields of my father. The winds are abroad: ghosts ride on their blustering wings; per-

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haps

* This poem is called in the original *Cath Mhanuis*, “the battle of Manos;” and sometimes, from the scene of it, *La eas Lao’ire*, “the day of the water of Lora.” Several circumstances in it are so calculated to lay hold of the memory, and strike the minds of *The many*, that it is still one of those that are most generally repeated by the lovers of ancient poetry; though the correct editions of it are not the most common.

That part of it which relates to Umad and his dog, is often repeated by itself, and well known by the title of “*Laoidh’ n Amadan mhoir’s a ghaothair bhain;*” or “*Laoidh’ n Umaidh gan geille’ na sloigh.*” *Amadan* and *Umaidh* are synonymous names: they signify “a fond,” or “foolish man.” It begins with these lines;

Tuirling a chlarsach a bhroin,
Tha cho’nuidh meafg sgéathan mo shinnsear;
Tuirling

haps when they hear thy voice, they will bid their airy courfers stop, that they may listen to their praise. ---Yes; for the night is already calm: the blue face of the sea is smooth; no breeze moves the withered leaf. The thistle's beard hangs in mid-air: the moon rests on the hill, its beams are on the low mists of the vale. In its gray skirts are the habitation of ghosts; they hover in silence over the bard, for still they retain their love to his song.

AND the song of Ossian 'shall not be with-held, spirits of my love: neither shall the harp of Cona, when you are nigh, be silent. It is not sweet as the harps of clouds, for its voice of age is mournful. But you love it, because it awakes the memory of the past, and brings back the days of your joy. You bend from your clouds to hear it, as listens some bard in the funny vale to the weak lay of the grasshopper. I listen, he says, for I heard it when I was young, and loved it. Thus you still love the song of Ossian.— But are there no bards that attend yourselves on your dark-winged course; who pour their nightly song in your dusky hall? Where is Ullin, the gray bard of other times, with his sweetly-trembling harp? Where art thou, Alpin, with thy pleasant voice? And, tuneful Carril, where art thou? Have you forgot all the songs of Selma; are you silent in praise of the heroes of Morven? No; sons of the song, you still tune your airy harps to their fame. The sound mixes with the sigh of the mountain: the hind, listening beneath the tree of her stream, hears it, when moon-beams glitter in the vale, and all is calm around. Sometimes also, I hear your soft voices in the breeze of night, when scarce moves the edge of the light withered

ed

Tuirling 'sgu cluinnte' le taibhfean
Air itte' na gaoith do cheolan,

'S iad a' eosga sion-steuda dan speur
A dh' eisdeachd i fuaim do thormain.

ed leaf of the oak. The thousand ghosts, with their dim joy, gather around you, to hear the voice of their praise *. They bend forward, leaning on their deathless spears. Their shields, like the broad mist of the darkened moon, hang on the half-viewless belt; and the meteor-sword is in the dark, shadowy sheath beside it.

BUT how feeble are you become, my friends, who once have been so mighty! A rougher blast, on the wing of its whirlwind, comes: the harp and the bard are driven before it; and the heroes are rolled, a mixed cloud, together.—The sound of their music still spreads along the silence of Morven; themselves are rustling in the distant blast, and mixing their voices with the stream of Lora.

IT was not so I beheld you once, heroes of woody Morven! It was not so I beheld you, when you followed the king, like the strength of his thousand streams to battle, when the strife of Manos rose. It rose on Lora, like the sudden storm of Lumon, which overtakes the mariner when he lays down his head, and says to his mates, We shall now have calm.

WE.

* The fancy of this passage ought, perhaps, to procure it a place in the poet's own words:

Ullin aos-sia nan teuda binn.
Ailpein ghrinn, 's a Chaoril cheol'air,
'N do chaili sibhs' orain ne Feine,
'S ar speis do chleachda nam Mor-bheann?
Ni hamhluidh; a chluanna nan dan,
'S tric fonn ar clarsach 'fa cheo,
'Se taosga' le ossun an aonaich
(Feadh gheanntai 'faoin nam fasach,)
Gu cluas na h eilid 'fi' g eisdeachd,
Fu' fhraith-gheugan 'f an oidhche fhuainbe.
'S ni'n teare gum chluasa fein
Fhuaim ea' tuom ar ciuil bhinn,

Tra 'f gann air guala na daraig
A gluaiseas an duilleach tha searge.
—Chi mi doilleir mile tannas
Ag ia'adh, nam pannal, man cuairt duibh,
A chlaesdin am molaidsi fein
'S an taic ea'trom ri fleaghan gun bhuaire.
Tha'n fgi, mar chruth dorcha na Gealaich,
Air crios leath fholuicht nan nialuibh,
'S an cloidhde dcalain na thruaill fein,
Ri fios doilleir nan treun-churaidh'.
Ach c'ait a bheil ar treise anois,
Tra dh'fhogras an ossag na cuairt sibh?
'N a luib dh'fhalbh 'm filidh 'f a cheol,
'S na fir mhora nan neula duainchi'.
Tha'm fonn a' fgaole fea' gheanntai' tosfach;
'S iad fein ann ofnaiche Laoire.

WE failed from Carric-thura's bay. Night tumbled in her restless bed from wave to wave; and the thick-woven clouds, with their many folds, concealed the stars. Night, thou art dark indeed.—Lift, Morven, said the bards, thy head through clouds. Selma, pour thy beam. Tonthena †, shake thy red hair above mists; Uloicha, let the travellers of Ocean see thy beam. And thou, broad moon, lift on the wave thy face, and spread in clouds thy white sails.

—BUT what faint light is that, which shoots its feeble ray thro' the gloom? It is like the eye of a ghost, when it darts a dim flame from his face, when the dusky winds lift, at times, his misty hair. It is some friendly spirit that guides us on the nightly wave: in its path let us steer our course.

WE reached the flame, dim-shining in its place; but no ghost was there. It was the light of the cave of Icola*. The beam had been dying away, after its flame had measured half the night. The burst of grief, as we approached it, met our ear. It sighed frequent in the gale of reeds. It came, pouring, from the hollow womb of a rock, and whistled mournful in its mossy beard. We stood and listened to its sound. It melted our souls of war.

“ THOU art fallen, friend of my age! and I remain alone in the cave of my rock. I groan beneath the load of sorrow, and of years.

† *Ton-thena*, “ fiery tail;” *Iul-oiche*, “ guide of night;” the names of certain stars.

* One of the Hebrides still goes by this name, but it is uncertain whether it be the same; as almost all these isles have lost their ancient names, and retain only those that have been given them by their

foreign invaders, when subject to the crown of Norway. Hence the names of these *Innse-Call*, or, “ isles of the strangers,” cannot be traced to any Galic etymon; while those of every country, promontory, &c. on the continent, have generally a significant meaning, and an obvious etymology.

years. O thou last of my friends, why hast thou so early left me ! O that I had died before thee ! Then wouldest thou have fled on my corse the tear ; and spread on my cold clay the dust. But thou couldst not survive me long. Thou wouldest waste in thy grief, like the flower of Etha, when its root is consumed by the secret worm. I remember thy sorrow when my foot had failed. Untasted beside thee lay thy food. Had I died; for very grief, thou wouldest go with me to the tomb. For thee can I do less ?—But should I wish to live, can I, on one foot, pursue Icola's deer, or have I another friend to bring them to my cave in their chace ? O that the last had never coime there ! It was with it thou didst fall over the rock in death.

“ BUT thou wouldest not leave me, O Gorban †, alone : I
think

† *Gas'r-ban*, “ a white hound.” The lamentation of Umad for his hound will not appear unnatural or extravagant if we consider the situation of the mourner. Lame, old, in a desert isle, and destitute of all other means of procuring subsistence ; his bound to him was every thing. The attachment and sagacity of the animal himself seem also to have been remarkable. Two days and nights he had lain on the tomb of his master's murdered son, as if he had meant to expire on the grave where his dust had been reposed, if the necessity of the old man had not called him away to a voluntary exile. His usefulness and sagacity there, we have already seen.

If we form our opinion of what these animals were at that time, from what we now find them, we may perhaps be not a little mistaken. Their usefulness to so-

cietry at that period, raised them to a rank which now they have no title to hold. Their education and occupation were the same with those of man ; and they constantly enjoyed both his company and his friendship, which must have greatly improved their nature, so susceptible of imitation and of gratitude. Strangers to the kennel, man late and early was their only companion ; and man, the fairest copy they knew, they strove to resemble. By man they found themselves raised above their proper place in the scale of being, for which they shewed their gratitude by exerting themselves to serve and to please him. This mutual friendship became at length so perfect, that almost all nations in the hunting state, or first stage of society, allowed, that even in their paradise, or that “ humbler heaven” which they expected beyond this life,

“ Their faithful dog should bear them company.”

“ It

think I hear thy spirit's tread. Till Umad be there, thou carest not for the deer of clouds. Soon shall the stag thou hast left me fail; and then shall I ascend to meet thee in midst. Be thy steps nigh my cave till then; at its shadowy side shall thy grave be dug. O that some wanderer over the wave would make beside it my narrow bed!"

"Why, said Fingal, dost thou weary for the narrow bed, dweller of the cave? Is not the night of the tomb long enough, although thou shouldst not bid its darkness hasten. Thou art not destitute; tho' time shakes in all thy limbs, and thy friends, like the years that are past, have failed. They are not the foes of the feeble, dweller of the rock, who are now around thee.

"I know, children of night, you are not foes to the feeble, but you are of the feeble yourselves. You cannot pursue the deer for Umad; neither can you dig, when he is no more, his grave. But you are not of the sons of the wind; I see your arms of steel. Come, stranger, into my cave; come, from the wanderings of night. Often have I spread the feast, and rejoiced in the presence of the sons of other lands. But now, no stranger do I see, though my cave is still open, and my nightly beam is kindled to guide them. Come, from the wanderings of night, and partake of my feast. It is the last gift of my low-laid friend; for there you behold the fair Gorban dead. No more wilt thou rise, my Gorban!"

WE entered and saw the white hound for which the aged
mourn-

It cannot be thought that too much stress is laid on the circumstances to which this attachment has been ascribed, if we consider, that even the ox of the Hottentot has acquired almost as much sagacity as

has now the dog of the European. And this is imputed, by *Buffon*, to his having the same bed and board and lodging with his master.

* It

mourned. Over it he leaned on a pointless spear; on the end of it rested his tearful cheek. The wind of the cave spread over his breast his white beard, and tossed his few gray hairs about his neck.—“ But thou wilt not rise,” he said with a sigh; “ thou wilt spring no more with joy on the heath, nor bring the wearied son of the mountain to my cave. No; but Gorban, on our clouds we shall meet *.”

We partook of Ulmad’s feast, and listened to his tale.

“ He whom you here behold, in all the trembling of age, was once no dweller of a lonely cave: he was the chief of Stramora’s echoing vale. Stramora, vale of my love! blue at the foot of thy gray rocks were thy streams; and green, on thy lofty hills, thy woods. Many were the heroes who feasted in my hall in peace, and stood behind the streaming of my banners in the day of war. My deer wandered over many mountains, and drank of distant streams. The morning sun rose on my dwelling with joy; and the evening shades were, to my halls, no harbingers of darkness. Two glad lights shone, in their brightness, there: the growing strength of Morad, and the mild beauty of Lamina. But they were beams that shone in the glad vale, only for a little. The storm came, and they hid themselves in secret.—Calmar beheld the beauty of my

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daugh-

* It has been already observed, that the story of Umad and his dog is among the most common of the fragments of Ossian. As the ancient Caledonians lived by hunting, it was natural for them to have a particular attachment to their hounds, and likewise to put a high value upon poems that celebrated this attachment. Hence a peculiar regard has al-

ways been paid to this piece, as we learn from an old proverbial distich (seldom forgot when the poem is repeated), in which we find it clasped with Dargo, as deserving a very particular attention. See first note on Dargo.

Gach dan gu dau an Deirg,
'S gach laoidh gu laoidh 'n Amadain mheir.

daughter, and fought her love; but she followed Morloch to the streams of Glendivar. The rage of Calmar grew. He came with war from Borba. Age was on the arm of Umad, and my son was young. The spear which he could lift was still but light; and thin was his youthful shield. He heard of the fame of that friend of strangers, the king of hilly Morven. He went by night to seek his aid. But Calmar heard the tread of his feet.—My son untimely dies!—The cry of death reached my ears. I took the shield of my strength in my hand: but I found it heavy. I put on the mail: but my knees trembled under its weight. I tried in vain to unsheathe the sword. Calmar sent me to this desart isle. Gorban heard my steps, where, for two days, he had sat on the tomb of my son. His tears were a stream on his grave; but his dreams of night were not of dark-brown deer. The thoughts of his sleep are of Morad: for him are his frequent sighs; for he will no more lead him to the chase, nor bound with him through the desart.—He heard my tread, and followed me. But his steps were heavy, like mine, when pensive I bore to his narrow bed the sleeping Morad.—Three years have since, with all their lingering days, failed by me on the deep. My foot too, by a fall in the chase, hath failed. But the burden of life, though heavy as the arms of his strength to the warrior of age, I still could bear, if thou, my Gorban, hadst remained with me. But now that thou art gone, I soon expect to follow.”

We felt for the aged chief. The king promised to restore him to Stramora. He looked to Gorban; and we heard his sigh. “O that thy tomb were near the dwelling of Umad!”—We promised it should; and glad was the face of the aged.

THE winds whistled through the withered grass, and shook the waving tree. A louder blast descended from the mountain. Its tread was like distant thunder on the hollow stream. Half-viewless sat on its breast a ghost. He waved, as he passed, a meteor like a sword. The moon half-looked upon it over the edge of the heath, and shewed its dark-red stain. His words came to some of our ears, as rolling by in his blast he said, “ Warriors of Morven, haste!”

WE opened our sails to the wind. We flew over the deep. Our speed was like the whale of Inistore, when she is pursued home by the storm of Lochlin. In silence we reached our coast. Manos was already there. He knew the king was absent; and he gave his oaths to the wind.

MORNING pours from the gates of the east. Morven lifts its head in gray day. The white mist ascends from Lora’s stream. It climbs up half the hill, and exposes to our view the sleeping host. “ I will ascend,” said Connan, “ and kill their king; why should he again deceive us with his words?”

SOUL of the small renown, said the king, dost thou think, because Manos is false, Fingal will be base? Did ever warrior of mine fly, like the shaft of night, without striking first his shield? —Young Fergus, where art thou? Go to that host: tell them, Fingal never draws his sword till his peace is first refused*.

FERGUS went; mild as the morning sun on the mountain, when its beams are bathed in dew, and a thousand trees, with all their

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flowers,

* This line (in the original, “ *Cha d’ ing, That the strong should always be thug Fionn riabb blar gun chumha*”) has merciful;—or, That quarrels, if possible, passed into a common proverb, import- should be avoided.

flowers, are seen below in their smiling lake †.—But the breeze soon comes, and spreads a momentary ruffle over the face of the smoothed wave. The yellow hills, and the trees in the deep, are vanished ; and all their beauty, for a season, is failed. Thus ruffled was the mild face of my brother of love, in his return from the hosts of Lochlin. Fingal knew he must fight. “ Manos demands the combat of heroes.”

THE combat of heroes he shall have, said the boastful Connan ; I will bring to my king the head of the chief.

WHY should not Connan be allowed to know the weakness of his arm ? He went : but Manos would not fight with the feeble. He bade the vaunting Fuathas come forth, to meet the boastful Connan.—In the battles of Lochlin Fuathas stood always behind ; nor even there was he void of fear. One night as they had fought to the moon, too far behind, by the side of a little stream, was Fuathas. A tall hero appeared on the other side ; and taller still appeared his spear. Fuathas flew : the other pursued him hard. In the midst of his fear, as he leapt the stream, he fell. Beneath him, to his joy, fell the foe. In vain dost thou plead for mercy, he cried, as he drew his sword. But none, save his own shade, had Fuathas.—Not smaller is now thy cause of fear, when thou descendest to engage with Connan.

WE saw him come forth from their host : but the rust was on
his

† The beauty of this passage in the original claims here a place.

Dh' imich Fear'as mo bhrathair fein,
Mar orra'-shleibhte bha chruth,
Tra bhios dearsa na maidne 's an drinchd,
'Sa chioill fa bla sun lochan fhe'ar.
Ach thuinling oileag an sonach

'S mhili i caoin ghuais na tracha ;
Thraig na coillte,—thraig na scleibhte
Bla 's an lochan fheimh ri gaire,
—3' amhail sin caochla cruth
Mo bhrathar teachd dubhach nar co'uil,
O fheachd Lochlan bha siar uainn.
“ Tha Manos ag iarruidh eo'raig,”

his spear, It sounded on his shield like the screaming of fowls, when they prepare to fight the battle of the wing on the watery ridge. Connan feared ; but he remembered the eye of his king. He rushed on with his sword, and wounded the gray feather in the crest of Fuathas. At the stroke the man of Lochlin falls down with fear. He thought the wound he had received was in the head. Connan turns to see if his king beheld. The sword of Fuathas comes behind, and hews his two ears from his head of pride. The valley echoes to his cry as back he runs to our host. At the foot of the king he falls. " I bravely die," he said; " Fingal, revenge thy hero's death *."

THE host of Manos came on with all their steel. Many were their shields and spears ; many their rattling mails and swords of light ; many their axes of war † to hew down the battle.—The joy of our people arose, as slowly we moved to meet them ‡.

—BUT

* The heroism of Connan, unlike all the rest of Fingal's warriors, lay chiefly in his tongue. For this reason he is upon all occasions ridiculed and exposed. Perhaps some mischiefs too, of which he had been the author, particularly the death of Dermid, had helped much to draw upon him this odium. In one of Ossian's poems he is called, *Mac mor na bba riabh ri olc*; " The heir of all who ever did evil." He is often called *Criónach nam Fiann*; " The blemish of Fingal's heroes." And from the above adventure he derived his common title of *Connan mael*; or, " Connan without the ears."—It is a strong proof not only of the valour but of the virtue of these heroes, that a single instance who failed in these

qualities was looked upon as a rare phenomenon, and branded with such marks of infamy and disgrace.—The name of Connan is become a proverbial appellation in the Galic, for a *peevish ill-natured person*.

† We find no mention of this weapon among the arms of Fingal. It was, probably, peculiar to the Scandinavians, and the same with the Lochaber-ax afterwards adopted by the Caledonians.

'B iomad cloidhe 's b' iomad fgiath,
B' iomad triath le luirich aigh
B' iomadach ann clogaidh eruaidh
B' iomadach ann tuagh chum sgath.

‡ A general engagement is sometimes related here, but so defective and incorrect as not to admit of a translation.

* * * * *

—BUT who comes in his speed from our hills, tall in the beauty of youth ? His spear in his hand is like a tree: and his shield is like the moon of night. He is from the land of strangers; he asks if he may fight the battle of the king. Fingal beheld the warrior with joy, and blessed the strength of his youth. But Manos demanded the combat of kings: for he remembered the thongs of Inistore; and his pride arose like a whirlwind on dark waves, when mariners fear the danger.

WE stood in our place †. Fingal went forward in his strength. The sound of his arms was like the noise of the spirit of Loda, when he spreads his blast over the land, and marks his path with death and terror. He struck with his spear the broad shield. His mail rung with the sounding of his steps: its noise was like the roar of a thousand waves, lifted by the rage of a storm against the dark side of a rock. The gathering of the tempest on the hero's brows is terrible. The son of Luno gleams high in his hand. His hair is tossed on the blast of winds, like the foam of a stream

white-

† This passage is much admired in the original, and is therefore inserted for the sake of such as may understand it. It has indeed a native grandeur in its own dress, which will not sit so unaffected and easy on the idiom of another language.

Chuaidh Fionn asios lc tartar namhann,
'S fuaimeach arm mar spiorad Lodata,
A' fgaole gloraig is crith-chatha
Feadh an rathaid gu grad cho'rag :
No mar mhilte tonn a' beucaigh
Ann stoirm citi ri fios carraig;
Mar sin bha fuaim arm fa luireach.
S air a ghnuit bha dulachd catha.
Bha chloide libhi' a dealradh,

Togt' ann aird an laimh a churaidh :
Sna gaoithe' strannar' a' gluafad
A chiaabh, air fhnuadh freothe buinne.
—Na cnue air gach taobh dheth chriithich,
'S chlifig an t slighe fui' a chosan;
Las a fhulean :—dh'att a chroidhe ;
B'ann sheilidh a chith 's a choflas !

* * * * *

Chuaidh an sgiathan breac nam blode' ;
Chuaidh an chloidhean gorm a bhearna ;
Chuaidh an sleaghan fada libhidh
A chabba' 's a ghniomh bu ghabhaidh :
Fhreagair na creagan don fhuaimneach
Thug gathana cruaidh gan strachda'
Thall so bhos,—air corp nan treulach ;
Cho' fhreagair na speuran ard dhoibh.

* This

white-tumbling from the mountain rock. The little hills shrink before him, and the earth trembles under his steps. Lochlin see the awful terrors of his face: they see in it the flames of battle; and the beating of their hearts is high.

THE chiefs meet in battle: their two hosts look, with trembling wonder, on the dreadful fight.—But its terrors who can describe? Their varied shields are hewn, piecemeal, down. Their blue swords are broken; and their long tough spears fly, through the whistling air, in pieces. The echoing rocks answser to their strokes; and the skies resound with the noise.—Manos at length is bound.

HOLD, said Connan, Manos of spears, till I cut away his head of lies.

I AM, said Manos, in the hands of Fingal; his wrath burns not, like thine, a deadly flame.

YES; thou art in my hands: nor shall Fingal stain his fame, with the blood of a low-laid foe. Once more thou mayest go: But thy spouse must mourn, if thou dost again come back.

HE spoke; but the face of Manos is pale. The spear trembles under his weight as he moves. The thistle comes across his foot. Stumbling, on earth he falls. The broad wound is in his side.—His shield had opened its bosom to the spear of the king; for it had heard his former words*.

HIS

* This refers to his swearing by his shield, in the end of the preceding poem, that he would not for the future trouble Fingal or any of his friends. The abhorrence of the poet, or rather of the people whose sentiments he spoke, to such falsehood, is strongly marked in his making the very shield of Manos resent it. Even Connan, low as his cha-

racter appears, had such a sense of the enormity of the crime as to think it deserving of instant death;

Cumaibh rium Manos nan lann,
Sgn fgarainn a cheann f'a chorp.

As every stage of society has its own virtues and vices, it may be observed, that lying, perjury and deceit, are refinements that belong to civilized life, rather than

His tomb was raised. But what could the bards say†? Manos remembered not his words. When he was asked what he had done with his oaths? "Alas!" he said, "where I found, I left them."—Manos, thou wert generous; but wrathful and bloody was thy darkened soul.

WE came to Selma's halls. The young hero who came to our wars was with us. But his countenance was sad, and often he looked to the hill.—"On its heath," he said, "I left the spouse of my

love.

to that period which we call barbarous. The barbarian seldom acquires the art of disguising his sentiments, or the virtue of sneaking through the winding paths of insincerity and circumvention.

† Of all possible evils, that of being denied the funeral-song was thought, by the ancient Caledonians, the most dreadful. On the song of the bard depended not only their fame in this world, but their happiness in the next. This persuasion could not fail to have a happy influence upon their conduct, as it would be a continual spur to good and great actions. Even till some time after the extinction of their superintendants the Druids, the bards maintained their dignity, and discharged this part of their office without any respect of persons. In the case before us, we see the impartiality of Ossian in drawing even the character of an enemy. His generosity is celebrated, both in this and some other fragments; but unfortunately his delight in blood is always joined to it: He is still

—Manos, faileach, corrach, fial,
And —Manos, Rí faileach nan cuach.

The Celtic bards did not, like the poets

of Greece and Rome, punish any man in the other world because he was unfortunate in this; as was the case with every one whom they forced to wander "A hundred years a melancholy shade!" (*Aen.* 6. 329.), for the want of burial. For their own faults only, the bards called people to an account: And then, as vice was never to be allowed quarter by them, they condemned the guilty to an adequate punishment, not only for a hundred years, but for ever; or at least till the *brath* or *dilinn*, when the world was to undergo a general revolution by fire or water. The morality which they inculcated was not the least valuable property of Ossian's poems. And it is remarkable, that his moral passages are in the original always short and striking; as if they had been intended to take hold of the memory, and to pass, as most of them have done, into common proverbs.—When any person fails in a solemn promise, nothing is more common than, by a distich of this poem, to remind him of the guilt and fate of Manos.

"Cait a bheil na mionnan mora Mhanuis?
Och! díthugas far an d' fhúaras."

love. We fled from the strength of Calmar; for his heroes from the streams of Borba were many, and the friends of Morloch failed.

His words reached the ears of Umad, as, bended, he leaned on his staff, like a tree ha'f overturned on Lena. The joy of the aged arose. He asked for Lamìna. She came. She flew to her father. We saw the mingled joy of their souls. We wondered why we wept in the midst of our gladness. Our tears of joy were pleasant; like the sweet drops that fall from the oak of Morlia, when its green leaves rejoice in the day of the fun.

To-DAY, said Fingal, we spread for the strangers the feast: to-morrow we give the children of distress our aid. The shield of Morven will stretch itself wide to cover the unhappy; and this sword is bright with joy when it is drawn to defend them. Then only the son of Luno † says, "I long to be bathed in blood."

THE night was spent in the feast and the song. Nor was thy

L 1

voice

† The sword of Fingal had this name from its maker Luno, a smith of Lochlin, who had likewise fabricated arms for some more of the Fingalian heroes. In return, Ossian transmitted his name to posterity in a poem composed on the subject, and known by the title of (*an Cobha*) "The smith." Some fragments of this piece which still remain are very characteristical of the manners of the times. In the following lines the poet, with the ardour natural to a warrior, describes the transport of their joy on receiving these implements of war; "O how glad were we the next morning on receiving our arms from Luno!"—He

also tells the different names or epithets given to their respective swords: such as, "the son of Luno;" "the flame of the Druids;" "the raven, or bird of prey;" &c.

O b' aighealach sinn an dara mhaireach.
Ann an eardaich Loin 'ic Liomhain!
Gum bu mhaith ar n ur chloïdh'ne
S' ar deagh sileagan fada righe.
B'e mac-an-Loin lann mhic Cu'il,
Nach d'fhag fuigheal riabh dli'sheoil daone;
Gum bi'n Drui'lannach lann Oiscair,
'S gum bi Choifgarach lann Chaoilte.
Gum bi 'n Liomhanach lann Dhiairmid,
B'iomad fear fiadhaich a mharbh i;
'S agam fein bha Gear-nan-calan,
Bu ghang, farum 'n am nan garbh chath.

* The

voice silent, my softly-trembling harp*. Thy sound was not then so mournful. Thou hadst, like me, thy companions about thee; and the king with his heroes heard thee. From their seats they leaned forward to listen; their faces were fidelong-bending.—No silent mist on the vale were then our friends, my harp.—No mournful voice in the hollow tree of the mountain was, then, thy sound: no moss-gray blasted tree, stript bare of all its leaves, was Ossian.

* The bard had in the beginning of the poem addressed himself to the solitary companion of his woe, the harp; and here he again returns to it.

T R A-

T R A T H A L *:

A P O E M.

THE ARGUMENT.

OSSIAN, feeling the sun warm on the tomb of Trathal, addresses that luminary, and relates an adventure of the hero on whose tomb he sits.—Colgul, having been worsted by Trathal at the chace and tournament, contrived a stratagem to resent the supposed affront. He lands a number of his followers on the coast of Morven; and sends an old man to Trathal to counterfeit distress, and ask his immediate aid. Being thus ensnared, he defends himself with great bravery; and kills many of his opponents, with their leader, before he is miffed by his people, who at length come to his aid.

SON of the morning, the steps of thy rising are lovely; the lifting of thy yellow hair above the eastern mountain. The hills smile when they behold thee; and the glittering vales, with all their

L 1 2

blue

* The hero of this poem was grandfather to Fingal, and generalissimo of the Caledonian army in their wars with the Romans. There is frequent mention made of him in the other poems of Ossian, and in tradition he is famous on account of his wars with the Druids. This piece, which could not be got altogether complete, goes by the title of

Sgeulachd air Tra'ul nam buadh

'S air Colgail nan tual bheart;

“ The song of Trathal the brave, and of Colgul of the base deeds.”—The address to the sun, with which it opens, is ex-

tremely beautiful; but, towards the end, resembling somewhat that grand passage of the same kind in Carthon. It was natural for sightless Ossian, as well as for Milton, to make frequent addresses to this luminary. It is probable, however, they had at first no idea in common, tho' they may have been afterwards confounded by the carelessness of those who recited them. The opening of the poem, as correctly as it could be obtained, is subjoined in the Galic.

'S a Muhic na h og-mhadain! ag eiridh
Air scibhte foir, led' chiabhan or-bhuidh;

blue streams, are glad. The trees lift their green growing heads through the shower to meet thee; and all the bards of the grove salute, with their morning-song, thy coming.—But whither does the night fly, on its dark eagle-wing, when it sees thy face; and where is the place of darkness? Whither do the stars retire from thy presence, and where is the cave in which they hide their trembling beauty? Into what desart dost thou chase them, when thou climbest the mountains of heaven, and pursuest them, like a mighty hunter, through the blue fields of the sky?—Son of heaven, the steps of thy course are lovely, when thou travellest above, in thy brightness, and scatterest from thy face the storms. The departure of thy yellow hair is lovely, when thou sinkest in the western wave; and lovely is the hope of thy coming. In the mists of night thou never lostest thy course; and tempests, in the troubled deep, in vain oppose thee. At the call of the morning thou art always ready, and the light of thy return

is

'S ait ceime do mhais air an aonach,
'S gach caochan gorm 's a gheleana ri gaire.
Tha croinn uaine, ro dhriuchd nam fras,
Ag eiridi gu bras ad cho'ail;
'S filidh bhinn nan coillte fas
A' cuir failt ort le'n oran maidne.
Ach c'ait a bheil ciar-im'eachd na haoiche
(Rod' ghnuis) ait sgiathan an fhircin?
C'ait' a bheil a'ig duibhre a co'nuidh,
'S naimh chofach nan reulta foillse.
'Tra leanas tu'n ceime gu luath,
Mar fhalcagair gan ruigis 's na speuran;
Thus a' dire' nan aonach ard,
'S iads' air faolin-bheannta fas a leimuidh?
'S aoibhinn do shiubhal a shollus aigh,
A sgaoileas le d' dhearsa gach donionn,
'S is maifeach do chleachdan oir
A' fhainmh fir 's do dhoigh ri pille.
Le seachran ann dalla-cheo na hoi'che,
Cha ghlaclar thu choidh' ann ad churfa;

'S doinionn nan cuanta gahhaidh
Cha seid gu brath a' t'iuil thu.
Le gairm na cuin-mhadsin bidh t' eiridi,
'S do ghnuis fheilidh a' dusga' gean;
A' fogra' na h oich o gach ait'
Ach suil a bhaird nach faic do shollus.
Ach amhul fo aos-lia lag
Bidh tuis fathasd a' d' aonar;
Do shiubhal 'sna speuran mall
'S tu dall mar mis'air an aonach.
Doilleis mar ghealach nan tra,
Bidh t anra's tu shiubhal nan speur;
Caiseamachd na maldne cha chluinn thu;
Mar na suinn gun luadh ri eiridi.
An sealgair feallaidh fo'n raon
Ach chon fhairc e t aogas a' t'iean;
Bruchdai' a dheoir, 's e pille' fu smalan,
" A mhadaí' mo ghraidh! threig a ghrian sin."
—Bidh aibhneas ann sin air foillse na hoi'che,
Tra bhios Mac na foillse mar Thra'ul.

is pleasant. It is pleasant; but I see it not, for thou dost not dispel the night from the eye of the bard.

—BUT the mist of years, one day, may dim thy own countenance; and slow, like mine, may be thy steps of age on Morven. A dim circle, like thy sister, thou mayest wander through heaven, and forget the time of thy rising. The voice of the morning will call, but thou wilt not answer. The hunter from his hill will look for thy coming, but he shall not behold thee. The tear will start into his eye. “The beam of heaven,” he will say to his dogs, “hath failed us!” He will return to his booth in sadness. But the moon will shine in her brightness; and the blue stars, in their place, will rejoice.—Yes, O sun, thou wilt one day grow old in the heavens; and, perhaps, sleep in thy tomb, like Trathal.

DOST thou not remember, O sun, the car-borne chief? His steps before thee on the mountain were lovely. One day as he wandered on Gormal’s heath, the beauty of youth, like light, was around him. A spear was in either hand; and the shield of his father was broad, like thy face, before him. His ruddy cheeks rose beneath a dark helmet, and his hair descended in streams upon his neck. As he went, he whistled, careless, the song of heroes. A son of age rises before him on the heath. His eye is red: on his cheek there rests the tear. Sad is his voice of grief, and mournful sings in his gray hair the mountain-wind.

“I COME,” he said, “to ask thine help, if thou art Trathal king of spears. On the banks of the distant Dula, many heroes heard once the shield of Tual-arma, and many strangers in his hall have feasted. But heroes hear now the sound of my shield no more; and my halls, where blazed in the midst of songs the oak, are si-

lent

lent, cold, and desolate. Mor-ardan saw the beauty of my daughter. No other child was mine. He loved her; but she heard him not. The wrath of his bosom was a fire that was concealed. He came on the sea with his skiff. Four rose upon his oars. Sligala and her father stood upon the shore. We are forced to go in the boat. The storm detains them now on thy coast. Give me, Trathal, one of these spears; and lend, thou first of men, thy aid."

TRATHAL heard the tale of grief. Joy and rage burned at once in his soul. He gave the spear, and fearless went: the murmur of his course was like a stream that is concealed. An host arose before him. The son of age behind them funk. The king, in his wrath, half-lifted the spear; but his soul bade him spare the age of the feeble. "Stain not, Trathal," it said, "with his blood thy spear."

FIFTY spears are lifted; fifty swords shake their flames, like lightning, around him. Colgul rises in the midst. The joy of his face is dark; as fire in the pillar of smoke; as a meteor that sits on a cloud, when the moon of night is dark, and the woody mountains hear the storm.

—IN Dorineffa he had once pursued with Trathal the chase, and lifted with the king, in sport, the spear. But who could pursue the chace, who lift the spear with Trathal? The brown-eyed maid of Dorineffa sighed, as she beheld the king; and turned away her eye from Colgul. The chief in the darkness of his wrath retired, as retires a ghost on his fullen blast when he cannot tear the oak. He waits in the cave of clouds, till he come again in the roar of winds.

winds. Thus waited for a feason Colgul; but now he comes with his thousands, when Trathal is alone.

THOU art alone, O Trathal; but thy thoughts are not of flight. Thy strength, like the contracted stream of Inar, grows. Thy soul, like the heaving ocean, swells in the roar of storms. Thy joy is terrible, like a spirit of night when he lifts his red head in the midst of meteors, and strides, in his dark-growing cloud, from hill to hill.

* * * * *

As the rolling of rocks from the top of hills; as the noise of waves when the tempest is high; or as groves when their dry hair is seized by flames through night,—such was the terror of the path of Trathal. Colgul and he were two mountain-streams in the strife: the sound of their steel was like the echo of the narrow vale when its green pines are felled.—Dreadful is their battle! Trathal is a storm that overturns the grove, and a wave that climbs the shore is Colgul †. But the eyes of Colgul reel in mist, as lights on his helmet the massy spear. Corran stands without his shield, like a rock which the lightning has bared. Duchonnis stops with his hand the red stream of his breast, and leans his back to a broken tree. The helmet of Crusollis glitters between his feet, with one half his head, before he falls: and the gray hair of Tual-arma is trampled in blood and dust, by the crowding feet of heroes.

COL-

† The original of this passage is so truly grand and terrible, that the translation gives but a very inadequate idea of it.

Chaidh Tra'al a fios na eide,
Mar sgarnaich o mhullach fleibhte;
Mar bhuinne-shruth fuaimneach oilteil,
No mar theine 'm falt nan coilltean.

Bha Colgul 'f e fein mar dha shruth aonach,
Chluinnté air gach taobh am beucaich;
B' airde fuaim am faobhar geala
Na toirm mhic-thalla 's croinn gan gearra.
Bha Tra'al mar neart na gaoithe
Leagas giuthas Mhor'ainn aobhach;
'Sbha Colgul mar luas nan streadh shruth:
Elios ri aodan sliabh ag ciridh.

COLGUL scatters from his red eyes the cloud. He sees his people in their blood around. Like the dark shadow of Lego's mist, he comes in silence behind the king. But he comes not unperceived. Trathal turns. Colgul flies. His steps are to the boat, and Trathal in his strength pursues him. A thousand arrows aim at the king. By one of them Colgul is pierced. He falls upon the shore, when one hand hath got hold of the boat. Trathal leaps into its dark womb, and turns upon the people of Colgul. He turns; but a blast drives him into the deep, and he bounds in the midst of his fame with joy.

THE spouse of Trathal had remained in her house. Two children rose, with their fair locks, about her knees. They bend their ears above the harp, as she touched, with her white hand, its trembling strings. She stops. They take the harp themselves; but cannot find the sound which they admired.—Why, they said, does it not answer us? shew us the string wherein dwells the song. She bids them search for it till she returns. Their little fingers wander among the wires.

SULANDONA looks for her love. The hour of his return is past.—“Trathal, where dost thou wander among streams; where has thy path erred among woods? From this height may I behold thy tall form; may I see the smiling joy of thy ruddy face. Between thy yellow locks of youth, thou lookest like the morning fun.”

SHE ascended the hill, like a white cloud of the melted dew, when it rises on early beams from the secret vale, and rushes scarce wave their brown tufted heads. She saw a skiff bounding on the deep: she saw on the shore a grove of spears.—“Surely they must

be

be foes that lift them ; and Trathal is alone. Can one, tho' strong, contend with thousands ?"

HER cries ascend upon the rock. The vales reply with all their streams. Youths rush from their mountains, and wildly tremble, in their steps, for their king. They thought of rushing on the people of Colgul in their wrath ; but Trathal raised on the deep his voice, and bade them stop the spear. They rejoiced when they heard the king, and saw him turn to the shore his ship.

THEY gathered about Colgul ; but his face was dark, and the flame of his eye had failed. His people stood mournful around ; but many of them had strewed the brown heath, like dry leaves on autumn's dusky plain when tempests shake the oak. We help them to raise their tombs ; and first we dig the grave of Colgul.—A youth stoops to place beside him the spear. The mail, in rising, drops from two heaps of snow. Calmora falls above her love.—Sulindona, as she came, beheld her pale. She knew the daughter of Cornglas. Her tears fell over her in the grave : she praised the fair of Sorna.

“ DAUGHTER of beauty, thou art low. A strange shore receives thy corse. But thou wilt rejoice on thy cloud, for thou sleepest in the tomb with Colgul. The ghosts of Morven will open their halls to the young stranger, when they see thee approach. Heroes around the feast of dim shells, in the midst of clouds, shall admire thee ; and virgins in thy praise shall touch the harp of mist. Thou wilt rejoice, O Calmora † ; but thy father, in Sorna, will be sad.

M m

His

† The whole of the song over Calmora is beautiful ; but the following verses are exceedingly soft and tender.

Biaidh gean orta a' d' neoil,
Ach t' Athair ann Sorna biaidh dubhach :
Ag im' e'achd air bile na tragha,

His steps of age will wander on the shore. The roar of the wave will come from the distant rock. ‘Calmora,’ lifting his gray head, he will say, ‘is that thy voice?’—The son of the rock alone will reply. Retire to thy house, O Cornglas, retire from the stormy shore; for thy Calmora hears thee not. Her steps with Colgul are high on clouds. On moon-beams she may come, perhaps, to thy dreams, when silence dwells in Sorna. Daughter of beauty, thou art low; but thou sleepest in the tomb with Colgul!”

Such was the song over Calmora; but who could speak in praise of Colgul? He and his people came, like the cloud of death that rises from the cave of Lano, and creeps through night into the booth of the hunter, when his eyes are closed, and all the winds are quiet. Often have their ghosts sighed on the mournful mists that lowly creep along the tombs: often has their voice been lonely there.—But thou feest them not, O sun: they only come when darkness robes the hills; when all thy beams are away. But thou feest the ghost of Trathal; often does he stalk in thy beams at noon, when the hills around are covered with mist. Thou delightest to shed thy beams on the clouds which enrobe the brave, and to spread thy rays around the tombs of the valiant. Often do I feel them on the bed of Trenmor, and even now thou warmest the gray stone of Trathal. Thou remeberest the heroes, O sun: for their steps in thy presence were lovely; and before their time thou

Thig ganraich nan tonn ga chluasan,
“ An e fo do ghuth, inghean mo ghaoil!”
—Tha ula aofda ri fionta’i arda.
Pill gu talia nan corn-glas,

Pill o stoirm alluaidh na traghá,
‘S gun neach a’ freagra’ do ghlaoidh
Ach Mac-thalla † nam faoin-fhasach.

† *Mac-thalla*, “the son of the rock,” is the Galic name for Echo.

thou hast shone on Morven. And thou wilt remember them in the time to come, O sun, when this gray stone shall be sought in vain. Yes: for, "Thou wilt endure," said the bard of ancient days †, "after the moss of time shall grow in Temora; after the blast of years shall roar in Selma."

† What bard Ossian refers to here is uncertain. He was possibly some one who had, by way of eminence, the title of "The bard of ancient times." It appears from the passage, that the art of poetry was by no means in its infancy in the days of Ossian. The excellency of his poems proves, that it had been long practised, and had then made a considerable progress. Some have supposed, that a great number of the Galic tales, which are in a language highly figurative and poetical, but not confined to numbers, have been the first essays in poetry, and

long prior to the æra of verse. This is not improbable, as the warmth of the uncultivated imagination and the barrenness of language would naturally give rise to all the figures of rhetoric before art could reduce words to measure or numbers. As many of the tales which accompany the oldest of the Galic poems are of this figurative and poetical cast, they are a strong presumptive proof of the antiquity of the poems which they explain: They likewise afford a curious view of the Galic poetry in its most early stages.

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DARGO THE SON OF DRUIVEL :

A P O E M *.

THE A R G U M E N T.

DARGO, the son of a chief Druid, having obtained some help from Scandinavia, is discovered landing by night on the coast of Morven. Two of Fingal's scouts, who had gone to watch his motions, are worsted by him in single combat, and then sent to challenge Fingal to battle. Fingal devolves the command that day on Curach, a chief of Innisfail. His father examines his arms; and relates to him an adventure of his early days to Iforno, which prepares us for the story of Ulan-forlo, near the end of the poem. In the engagement, Dargo is slain; and Curach, after losing one hand, and behaving with uncommon bravery, dies as he is retiring from the battle. Some reflections, suggested by a Druidical grove, and the poet's notions of the state of the dead, begin and end the poem. The scene is around the stream of Moruth; and the time seems to be the end of spring, or beginning of summer.

A SOUND comes by halves to my ear. It is like the voice of a wave that climbs, when it is calm, the distant rock. It is the voice of Struthan-dorcha's stream, murmuring, deep, in the vale

of

* As the name of Dargo is frequent in the poems of Ossian, this hero is further distinguished by his patronymic of *Mac-Drui-Bheil*, or "the son of the Druid of Bel," probably the Arch-druid of the Caledonian kingdom.

The Druids, for some generations back, had been at variance with the family of Fingal; and this seems to have been the

last struggle which they made for existence. They had got some aid from Scandinavia, and seem to have been no strangers to war themselves. But all their prowess, assisted with the incantations of their allies, was too weak to cope with a race of warriors. They were forced to submit; but their conquerors, having nothing to fear from them, permitted

them

of oaks. In the bosom of its grove is the circle of stones. Dim unfinished forms sigh, within their gray locks, around it. The sons of the feeble hear the sound; and, trembling, shun the awful shadowy spot. “The haunt of ghosts,” they say, “is there.”

BUT your voices are no terror to the bard, spirits of dark night, pale-wandering around your awful stones. No: I tried the strength of your arm when alive; I lifted my spear in battle against your mighty Dargo, against the terrible son of Druivel.

A TALE of the years that have fled, on their own dun wings, over Morven.

THE chase was over in the heath. The wearied sons of the mountain laid themselves down to rest; their bed of moss is in the shade of groves. The hills robed themselves in the folds of darkness, and the heroes feasted in Selma. Song on song deceived, as was wont, the night *; and the sound of harps arose. The howling of gray dogs is heard, in the calm of the song. Their place is on the top of their rock, and their look is towards the dark-rolling of ocean. Our scouts repair to its shore; Sulinroda of quickest sight, and Calcoffa, foot of speed.

SHOULDST thou not now arise, half-wasted moon, from thy bed of heath; should not thy horn appear above the rock of Morven? Lift it, fair light; look down, through trees, on the sleeping roes, and

them to retire to their shades, and die in obscurity.—This poem begins with the following lines:

Tha fusim am chluasa fein,
Mar thonn ann cein air muir shaimhe;
Do ghlaodh, Shruithain-dorcha, 'se t'ann,
Ri tormen ann gleann nan gengan.
'N ad dhoirre tha ra' nan clach.
'S taibhise cianail 'nan glas-eide'.
" 'S tiamhaidh fo!"

*Till of very late the custom of spending the winter-night in the tale and song prevailed universally in the Highlands. This gave the mind a stock of ideas and sentiments which it can never derive from the few red and black spots which constitute the great amusement of a politer age and a more polished people.

* *Sulin-*

and let the stream of Cona glitter in thy beam. Point out to our scouts the way ; and if the dark path of strangers be on the nightly deep, lead them to the feast of Selma. The gate of Fingal stands always open, and bids the benighted traveller to come in.—Break through your clouds, stars of night ; Uloicha, pour thy beam !

—BUT you slumber on your beds, ye lights of heaven. The darkest clouds are your covering ; and thick mists, fold on fold, like Ossian's robe, conceal you. No ray breaks through. The heath is dark ; and no beam trembles on the sea, fave where breaks the wave upon a rock, and sends abroad its sound. Ghosts hear it, as in their ships of mist they pass, and bid their mariners turn away their sails.—Rise, O moon, on the hill of heath ; break through your clouds, ye stars of night : Uloicha, pour thy beam !

GRAY morning half-appears. The heads of the mountains see it, and rejoice. A low murmur comes on the breeze ; it grows on the ear of our scouts. It is the buzz of the morning flies, on their dusky cloud, said Sulinroda*. The hum of the mountain-bees, said Calcossa, coming forth from their mossy hive. The traveller with his careless foot hath touched it ; and their thousands rush forth to war.—Nor flies of the morning, nor bees of the mountain, make the noise, replied Sulinroda ; is not that an host on the shore, moving through that column of mist, like the moon of night in her steps of silence ?

THE scouts, abashed, return. They did not perceive the host till day arose ; and how shall they behold the mild face of the king ? Blushing, they walk with unequal steps : on earth they often pitch their quivering steel. At the foot of a gray rock, as

they

* *Sulin-roda*, “ a discerner of roads ;” *Calcossa*, “ light or swift of foot.”

they pass, they halt. One hand beats their breast; the other strokes their beard. A broken stream leaps down from cliff to cliff: it falls, a thick shower in their wandering hair. But the scouts perceive it not; far distant, in the caves of thought, is their silent soul.

AT length the bursting figh of Sulinroda rose. The eagle heard it in the cleft of her rock. She shook her fluttering wings, and the souls of the chiefs awake. “ Let us demand the combat of heroes, and return with our fame to the king.”

THEY went, like two mountain-streams that rush, white, from the heathy hills, and join in the vale of trees their force. They sweep the earth and stones before them in their course, and toss on every side, amidst foam, their rooted trees. The boy, from his distant rock, beholds with fear their terrible beauty. He grasps in his hand the bending oak, as beholding them he backward leans.—Such streams were the scouts of Morven; but in the son of Drui-vel they met a sea.—Calcoffa first is bound. Sulinroda next main-tains the terrible fight; but who could fight with Dargo? The hunter hears their noise, as he sleeps beneath the shelter of his rock; he thinks the passing thunder hath torn its crumbling brow, and he trembles in his dream. The roe sees him, as silent-bounding she steals by with her son, the dun kid with the long feet. She wonders he does not fly for safety, like her, to the stream of the distant wood. She shakes her head, as she flies. The thought of her soul is, “ Hunter, thou art not wife.”

THE echo of arms descended on my morning dream in Selma. I stretched my hand, in my sleep, to grasp the spear. The

next

next breeze drove a louder sound against my ear ; I sprung awake, and struck the bosc.

THE king arose. The shield of Morven sent abroad its sound. The heroes rushed from their hills, like the path of whirlwinds in withered oaks. In their course are a hundred sons of Innisfail. They saw the son of Druivel with his gathered host. They saw his banners float, with their blended colours, in air. " Give me," he says, " the equal combat."

HIS chiefs brightened before Fingal. But the youths of Innisfail were strangers. They stood, each bending forward as he grasped the spear. Their eyes, under their helmets, were fixed on the king : they seemed like silent meteors under dark clouds, when trembling groves see them from afar, and the bounding of roes is to the rock of the desart.—In the midst of their souls they spoke ; but no voice of theirs was heard. Fingal saw their eyes were flames of battle ; and his own people had already got their fame : the children of distant streams spoke of the heroes of Morven.

CURACH, said the king, lead thou the battle with thy heroes of Innisfail. But, Ossian, let thy shield be near : it has often been a rock that sheltered the oak of the mountain, when its head was bending beneath the storm, and the crashing of groves was heard around.

THE aged chief of Sliruth leaned to the trunk of a pine that had been torn, from its dark rock on high, by angry ghosts, or eddy-winds. With one hand he, thoughtless, pulled off its gray moss ; in the decayed strength of the other, he still held his father's spear : its gleam was hid beneath the growing crust of years. There, the days of his youth rolled themselves, a silent stream, over his soul.

All the murmur of their course, as they passed, was the low hum of a song. He wished it might travel with his fame to the years to come.—But when he heard his son named for the battle, the thoughts of other years retired. Between his gray-hanging locks arose the smile, as he turned his eye to see his son. He turned his eye, but his sight had failed. The night of age around him is dark: its mists are thick; no light will dispel their gloom.

“TAKE, Curach,” he said, “this spear. Often have the valiant, like dry leaves, strewed its path in war. Wield it like thy fathers. My eye is dim: but let them behold thee from their clouds, that their faces of mist may rejoice.—

“Let me feel, my son, thy sword, since age hath dimmed the eye of Sorglan *. Let me feel thy sword; is it sharp and strong for the battle? Let me feel thy shield; is it a rock of brass in danger?—It is; but strengthen its thongs: I wore them not so weak in the days of my youth, when I bounded to the battle of spears; when the blood, like a mountain-stream, leapt in my veins for joy.

“CURACH, thy father, in his youth, was a tempest that rushed through the ranks of war. Seven heroes attended once my steps in Iforlo. We pursued, three days, its deer. The pride of Ulthoran rose. Never before, he said, was I distanced at the chase.—On the shore he burnt our boat; and twenty of his people he ordered at night to seize us in our cave. Iulorno, that beam of beauty in his halls, had heard his words. She saw the face of her father dark, as the cloud of Lano before the storm. She loved my steps

* *Sorglan*, “open and generous;” *Curach*, “rage of battle;” *Sliruth*, “streamy hill.”

steps on the heath. My image grew a lovely tree within her soul, and she trembled for the growing blast. ‘ If it lay thy green branches low, no leaf of mine,’ she said, ‘ shall flourish; no voice of the spring shall awake my beauty.’—In the evening we found the beam of light in our cave. Her yellow locks wandered, on her blushing face, in the midst of tears, as she told the tale of death.—‘ Shun,’ she said, ‘ the cave this night; but tell not the steps of Iulorno were nigh it. The soul of my father is dark, as the gathering of night in the narrow house; why should he know that his daughter loves the chief of Sliruth?’

“ SHE sunk in her cloud, and retired; like the moon of heaven when she hath shewn the bewildered traveller his path on the heath. He was wandering thoughtless on the face of a rock; the beam shone around him: quick he turns his steps; and blesseth the light that saved him.

“ WE fought with the warriors of night, and prevailed. We went for Iulorno, but the steel of her father had pierced her breast. Nigh his gate we found her in her blood. She was fair as the dying swan on the foam of the stream of Lano, when the arrow of the hunter is in her breast, and her down is lifted by the breath of gales.—Her brother asked her why she would not rise; and asked us, wondering, why we wept?—I gave the child a sword of light. I reared the tomb of the fair, on the shore of her native land.—Moon-beams shine on the place when all is dark around; and virgin-ghosts breathe there, on the passing breeze, their song. The soul of Iulorno is with them in mist; the music of her voice is mournful. Through every warm shower, the sun smiles on her green turf, and bathes its rays in the dew of her tomb.—Three

days our tears fell on the grave of Iulorno ; on the fourth we sailed in the ship of Ulthorran.—Such, Curach, were the early deeds of Sorglan ; be thy fame, my son, like that of thy father.”

* * * * *

As the eagle comes, rustling with joy, from her rock, when she sees her prey, the young fawn, sleeping in his dun mossy bed below ; such was the joy of Curach as he bounded down to battle. The murmur of his people followed his steps : their sound was like the noise of a stream, when it travels beneath a rock ; like the thunder hid in earth, when the woods shake their heads, but no fiery cloud finges their blasted beard.—Dargo came on, red eye of battle, rolling along his hosts, like the stream of Balva. Silent and slow, but deep and strong, is its course *.

ON either side of Moruth’s stream the heroes stride. A while admiring each other they stand. With joy they bound on their spears, and meet in the midst of the dark rolling flood. Over them bend in stormy clouds their hosts, and mix around them steel with

steel.

† Some verses describing the manner in which the different companies repaired to their respective standards are here repeated, but their inaccuracy forbids a translation. They are somewhat curious, as they give the names of the different standards. On this account, a few of them are here annexed.

Chuir finn amach a dh’ fhulang dorainn
 Bratach Fhear’ais oig mo bhrathar,
 ‘S thog finn amach bratach Chaoilte
 ‘N Lia’luideagach aobhach anraich.
 Thogadh atus mo bbratach fein,
 ‘S a follus mar ghréin ann duibhre ;
 ‘S thog finn amach an Lia’luimneach,
 Bratach Dhíarmaid oig o Duibhne, &c.

* Some repeat here a description of a general onset ; but, as the following sen-

tence gives reason to suspect that it is rather a part of some other poem on the like subject, it is omitted. The verses, however, on account of their poetical merit, are here set down in the original.

‘N finn chuaidh finn ann dail a cheile,
 Sloigh nan Droidhean ’s Snnin na Feine,
 ‘S bu luaithe na greanna-ghaoth carraich
 Sinn ar dol ann tus na t eug-bhoil.
 Na bu luaithe na milte do shruthaibh
 A’ ruith ann aon flugan o ardaibh,
 Bhiodh a hencach gi treun meannach
 Le toitim gheimhráidh o gach fasach.
 Cha hneucadh treun thonn na tuinne,
 Nuair bhuailet e ri creagan arda
 Le neart na gaoil tuath ’s ann fhaoilteach.
 Cha stiudadh ri gaoir an ard-chath,
 —Ceart choi’m eas comhrag nam fear
 Cho’n fhaca mi riabh ri m’ latha.

steel. Here the stream runs red. There it breaks white over shields. Blood rests, curdled, on the ooze of its stones ; and heroes swell, in their death, the tide.

BUT who shall give to the song the rage of battle ! The shield of Curach falls from its broken thong. He reaches his hand to grasp it. The sword of Dargo cuts it off. Clung to the shield, it swims along the stream. But still the other hand is left.

THREE steps he retires. His sword leaps from its dark sheath : its light gleams in air, on high. “ Spread, Ossian, before me thy shield ; but lift not thy spear against the foe. The fame of the warrior shall arise, only, when foes have the equal combat.”

I WILL not fight with the wounded foe, said Dargo. My fame, in his death, would not arise. Retire, and think of battles that are past. I will contend with that son of the king beside thee.

CURACH goes. In his eye is the flame of battle. Lying on earth, he spied a shield : its owner beside it sleeps, nor hears he the din of war. “ Bind it, Conchana, with all its thongs to my breast. I will elsewhere reap the field. They shall not see that Curach’s hand hath failed.”

My spear was lifted against Dargo, as he rose on the bank of the stream. With the stroke he stumbles back : a withered oak is grasped in his fall. The crashing of arms, of branches, and of bones, is mixed.

HE rose, and leaned against the tree in his place. His hand lifted still the sword ; but I spared the decay of his strength. Around him his people fall, like the withered leaves of the oak before the wintery blast. The stream leaps, bubbling, over their heads ; and spreads, around stones, their hair. Helmets lift,
here

here and there above the stream, their nodding plumes.

LIFT, said Dargo, thou son of the king, thy sword; I am not fallen yet.—I lift mine, said Curach, as he came, rushing through the storm of the battle, and strewing men and branches, with his lightning, along the stream: I lift mine, he said, as it descended, a flash that blasts the oak, on Dargo.

THE chief fell in the stream. Its banks echoed around. His people shrank back in their place.—But Cuthon † still rolled our heroes in their distant wing, as the whirlwind rolls the pillar of dust; as the blast sweeps over a plain of ice the driven snow. I turned my steps to meet him; but Fergus was before me. His soul of battle burned at the sight of Cuthon: his eye was like a stream of fire on a cloud of night. He bends forward with the joy of a young eagle, when it sees its dun prey from Moruth's top. It spreads its wings on the stream of winds; but the bounding son of the roe hears the rustling of his course, and retires beneath his trees.

CUTHON, a while, stood terrible in his place; like a nightly ghost when he rests on Lena. He seizes the meteors of heaven as they pass; he clothes his dark limbs in their terrors, and meditates again the war of clouds above the trembling nations. So stood Cuthon, girding anew his arms: but he saw his people vanish; and fidelong, he slowly, angrily, retired.—Twice, as he went, he turned in the midst of his doubts, and stood like the stream of the vale of Balva *, where it knows not which way to turn its course.—He looks at length to the place where his father fought. He sees his red hair wandering on the breast of the stream.

In

† The son of Dargo.

* *Balva*, “a still stream.”

In one hand he still grasps the sword ; in the other he firmly holds the mossy oak. Cuthon wildly runs. He lifts a mournful load. He bears his father to his hill : the rattling of his arms, and the voice of his sighs, are mixed.

WE slowly returned to the king. A little rill met us on the heath. Curach tries to bound over it on his spear : but across it the hero is stretched. The gurgling stream climbs his bosky shield ; and leaps, gray, over his wounded breast.

GIVE, Ossian, he faintly said, give this sword to my son. In the green rushy vale of Sliruth he pursues the tufted down, as it flies on the wing of sporting ghosts. Near him the water leaps from the height of rocks : between two woody banks it falls ; the sound, deep-murmuring, rises on my boy's ear. "I hear," he says, "the steps of my father."—With the unequal pace of joy he runs to meet me ; but he sees the gray stream.—Return, my child, and pursue thy down ; my eye will gladden with joy, as I behold thee from my hovering cloud.—Tell him, Ossian, how his father died ; that the battle may grow in his soul, when the years of his strength shall rise.—*Oi-lamin* † prepares for me the robe. Her tears fall as she bends over the loom. A thought comes across her soul, and her white hand supports her waving head.—*Oi-lamin*, thy fears are true ; thy hero lies now on Moruth's * heath !—Spare then, my love, thy toil. The gray passing mist shall yield a robe to Curach.

WE opened the tomb for the chief ; and raised, amidst the voice of the bards, the stones of his fame. The sound reached the ear of his father ; as, bending forward, he listened for the return of

his

† *Oi-lamin*, "soft-handed virgin."

* *Moruth*, "great stream."

his son. He thought he was coming with the song of his fame, and he stretched his hand to search for him. The mournful song of the tomb strikes louder upon his ear.—“ And has thy father now no son, O Curach!”

HE came, groping through darkness for his way. He stumbled on the heath over a hero, whose soul had been travelling through the path of wounds. “ How weak,” he said with a sigh, “ is now become the chief of Sliruth !”

THE wounded half-raised his head over a broken shield, that had been fixed with the head of a lance to his breast. “ Was the chief of Sliruth,” he said, “ ever in Iforno ?—If thou wast, take this sword ; perhaps thou mayst know it. A beam of light I received it, when young. No more shall Ulan-forno lift it.”

THE memory of the past rushed, like a torrent, into the stream of Sorglan’s grief. We heard the bursting of his crowded sigh over the brother of Iulorno, the early beam of his love.

WE bore the two to the grave of Curach. Sorglan felt the place where he was soon to rest. And Ulan-forno faintly bade us raise, with the mighty, his tomb. “ Send to my hall,” he said, “ this ashen spear ; it may support, in place of me, an aged mother. But no son, no young spouse of mine, is there to behold it. Ulan-forno dies like the young oak on the solitary mountain, when the spirits of Lano breathe over the desart. Its roots are torn by the blast ; and no tender shoot from its trunk shall spring. Raise here my tomb, heroes of Morven : send home my spear.”

AND thy spear shall be sent, said the king ; but is that all thy mother shall receive in place of her son ! Now the oak flames bright in her hall. The song of the bard is up. He compares
the

the bright blaze to the fame of her son. Joy trembles in her aged soul, and the tear of gladness grows upon her cheek. "The fame of Ulan-forno," she says, "shall be a sun to my evening steps. A streak of light on the mountain shall be the decay of my years. The young shall bless the mother of Ulan-forno."

SHE stops to wipe the tear of joy from her dim sight. The shield emits a fainter sound. The colour of its boss is stained: the face of the aged is pale with fear.—The gray dog howls without. Does he mourn; or does he see the coming of Ulan-forno?—The aged bard goes out to see. He rests at the door upon his spear: his eye travels through the blue land of night. He sees a ridge of clouds failing, on the blast, across the sea. He knows the heroes of his land have fallen. He bids their hall of air to open, and their fathers bend to receive them. He sees Ulan-forno move before the rest, a taller form. A star dim-twinkles through the dun eagle-wing of his crest. Dark-wandering streams mark his broken shield; like the black ooze of the mountain-rock, which points the course of the melted snow.—The cloud varies its form. The bard returns. His face is dark as the meteor at which he looked. His harp is in his hand; but its voice is mournful.—"Hang it in its place, O bard," the passing form seems to say; "for in Morven we have our fame."

YES, rider of eddying winds, thou didst receive thy fame in Morven. The king himself was not silent in thy praise, when Sorglan, with the image of Iulorno in his soul, shed over thee the tear; and the bards mixed thy name with the song of Curach.—Often do I still remember thy name, when thou comest on thy northern blast, to hover above the field of thy fame. The chil-

dren admire thy tall form. "A ghost," they say, "bends over Moruth; the dim path of the spear is in his shield and breast; and we faintly see, through the mark, the burning stars."—I hear them, and know it is Iforno's chief. I teach the children the song of his fame. They say that Dargo, at times, is with him; that the winds lift the red meteor that forms his hair, and that the gray oak is still beside him†.—I rejoice in their visits to our hill, where no ghost of the departed molests them. No; the feuds of other years, by the mighty dead, are forgotten. The warriors now meet in peace, and ride together on the tempest's wing. No clang of the shield, no noise of the spear, is heard in their peaceful dwelling. Side by side they sit, who once mixed in battle their steel*.

There,

† The poet supposes the oak to be as essential a neighbour to the Druid in the next world as it was in this.

* Ossian, on several occasions, shews a liberality of sentiment which does honour to his character. Here he not only allows future happiness to his enemies; but, well judging the little differences of this world of too small importance to be renewed beyond the grave, wishes for the most cordial reconciliation. Those who were at variance here, as he elsewhere expresses it, "stretch their arms of mist to the same shell in Loda." (Poem of Oi-na-morul.)

Such has been the fate of the Galic poetry, that its most beautiful passages are generally those which have been most objected to. To suppress any of them, on this account, would be as cowardly, as it would be presumptuous to treat the prejudices that are against them with in-

difference. Every body has as much right in this case to judge for himself as the translator has, who does all he can to put this in their power, by laying before them the words of the original.

Cuairt nam flath gur ait leam feá

Gu aonach nan tannas gun bheum,

Far chuirre' gach falachd air cul

Sa bheil na seoid a dh'aon run.

Tha codhail nan Cathann ann sith

'S iad air sgiathan na doininn gun stri'

Gun bheinn-sgeithe gun pharum lainne

'N co'nuidh thosdach na caomh-chlainne.

Tha sliochd Lochlinn is Fhinn, gn h ard,

Ag ciseadhach caithreamh nan aona bhard;

An uigh cho'n eil tuille ri stri'

'S gun uireas' air siothann no stri'.

Tha'n suil air na bliana' i a threig

(Le snotha gun ghean mar mi fin)

'S air raoi nan rna'bhoi le io'nadh,

Ou glas-eideadh air mharcadh fhine.

—Mar sgeul nam bliana' i chaidh seach

Air iteig aonach, le'n ciar-dhreach,

Tha aisling na beatha dhuibh's a Fhlaithibh;

Mar tha dhamhsa Dearg nan cathaibh.

'There, Lochlin and Morven meet at the mutual feast, and listen together to the song of their bards. Why should they any more contend, when the blue fields above are so large, when the deer of the clouds are so many? Like me, they look back with a smile on the years that are past, and sigh at the memory of the days that will no more return. They look down on the earth, as they ride over it, on their gray-white clouds, and wonder why they contended.—Yes, heroes of happier climes! you look back on the dream of life, as Ossian does on the battle of Dargo.—It is a tale of the years that have fled, on their own dun wings, over Morven.

CUTHON * THE SON OF DARGO:

A P O E M.

THE ARGUMENT.

DARGO, whose death is related in the preceding poem, being sent away in the night to his place of burial, Ossian and Sulocha reconnoitre the enemy. Some of their incantations and superstitious rites are mentioned. The attitude of Cuthon the son of Dargo is described. On hearing the shield of Fingal they return, and meet in their way with a wounded hero, from whose story Sulocha becomes much interested in his favours.—An affecting incident occurs in passing by Cú-rach's tomb.—The command, this day, is given to Fergus the son of Fingal. His descent to battle, and that of Cuthon, described; with their engagement.—Fingal, coming to the assistance of his son, puts an end to the battle. Cuthon, leaving the field, dies of his wounds.—He is reconciled to Fingal. His people are invited to the feast; and a lasting peace is concluded, by means of Lugar, whose story is given.—The poem is addressed to the pine that covered the grave of Cú-rach; and the scene is the same with that of the preceding poem.

THE wind of heaven whistles in the moss of thy gray branch,
· tall pine of Moruth ! The blast bends thy withered top, and
strews thy gray hair, like mine, around. Our strength is fled on
the

* *Cu-thonn*, or contracted *C'onn*, “ the voice of waves.” This poem is connected with the foregoing; the title of it in the original is generally expressed by these verses :

Sgeulachd air C'onn mac an Deirg,
Air a lions' le trom fhéirg;
Dol a dhiolá'bas athar gun fhéall,
Air uaslibh's air maithibh na Feine.

“ The tale of Cuthon the son of Dargo, when he rushed in his wrath to revenge the death of his innocent father, on Fingal's heroes.”

The address to the pine of Moruth is natural; as also the poet's passion for assimilating every object to the state of his own mind. In the absence of his beloved

the wings of years: years that return not again, from the dark wandering of their flight along the streams of the desart.---But we were not thus weak, when roared on the heath of Moruth the strife of battle; when trembled the wide-skirted field beneath the steps of the terrible Cuthon.---Dost thou not remember the strife of Cuthon, gray-haired pine of Moruth? It was in the days of thy youth; and thy memory, like the bard's, may have failed. It may have failed; but the light of the days that are past, though dim, is pleasant.

A TALE of the years that will no more return from the dark wandering of their trackless course over the heath of the desart.

THE battle of Dargo was over; and the heroes repos'd themselves on their shields. Beneath thy branches, O pine, which then were green, three stones, children of the stream, reared on high their oozy heads. We bade them tell to future times where we laid the mighty Curach. Beside him I leaned that night, on my shield; when sleep, like the cloud of Ardven, spread over my soul its mist. But the forms of other times beamed on my mind, as the sun on Cona's winding-stream, when the shadowy hills are dark, and mists are on the head of deer. Curach rose from the midst of a cloud before me, such as lately he appeared in the field. The fire of battle was still in his eye; and a faint meteor, like a sword, lighted his path through darkness. A blast lifted his dusky shield; no sinewy arm was below, to grasp its thong. I knew the ghost

of

loved Malvina, and every other human friend, this personification became necessary; and the contrast between the present and past days renders it not disagreeable.---The story of Lugar, or *Dan Liughair*, towards the end of the poem, is

generally recited as a detached piece. But as this seemed to be its proper place, it was restored to it, and a sentence or two of the other poem transposed towards the end of it.

of my friend. A while he stalked before me, mournful; and often the blast had whirled his limbs together; but still he seemed like Curach.

“ **W**HY sleeps Ossian?” he said, as bending over me, on the breast of his blast, he leaned: “ Should the warriors of Morven rest, when danger rolls in darkness around them?”—He took the pine of Moruth by the head, and shook it as he flew. Amids a shower of rustling leaves, I awoke from my dream, and kindled the flame in the withered oak. The wanderers from the host of Cuthon beheld it, and retired. I called for the scout. He came. His steps had been over Moruth; he had been viewing the hosts of the foe.

DARGO they had sent to the green isle, where his fathers rest *. Dark-bending over them spreads an aged oak. Its waving branches are worn by the gray mossy stones that lift their head in its shade. Bards sing there to Dargo’s praise; and the forms of his fathers are seen above, dark-musing, on their misty clouds. Their red eyes are sad, for they behold the fall of their son.

WITH Suloicha the scout, I cross in silence the stream of Moruth. We hear the voice of the sons of Loda, as, three times, they call on the spirits of their fear. We hear their shrieks going round the stone of their power.

“ Roll,” they said, “ ye vapours of Lano, that bring death to the

* This isle is supposed to be that of Lena, to which the last remains of the Druids, according to bishop Pocock, had retired. Its ancient name was *Innis-Druinach*, or “ The isle of the Druids.” They were in possession of it till St Co-

Jumba fixed upon it for the seat of his monastery, towards the end of the 6th century. Their burial-place is still shewn, at a due distance from the consecrated ground allowed for the repose of their Catholic brethren.

the people ; roll your dark-red columns on the hill of the foe. Descend, Loda, into their dreams with thy terrors. Rise before them in thy awful form. Spread around the flames of thy lightning, and let the thunder of thy course be heard.—Roll, vapours of Luno, round the foe. Loda, descend to their dreams with thy terrors *.”

NOR silent stood the gray fons of other times †, when the children of Loda spoke. They called; nor did they call in vain. The friends of Dargo heard them, as they passed in their rustling blast. Enrobed in meteors they came, and shone, at times, around Dargo's son. Often had the strangers fled with fear from the sign, like the roe from the hill of heath, when it waves its crackling flames before her. Bounding the flies to the secret vale of her wood, nor waits she to look behind. So, often fled the mighty from the danger of the race of Dargo. But no danger did the king of Morven dread, though some of his heroes were half afraid.

We saw, as we viewed the foe, the son of Dargo by himself retired. Now, thoughtful, on his gleaming spear he bends. Now he

* The Scandinavians used incantations so much, that, in later times, every scrap of their learning and of Runic poetry was supposed to contain some powerful magical charm.—This passage is in a different measure from the rest of the poem. The numbers have in them a sort of wildness and ferocity highly adapted to the subject and occasion of them.

A cheo na Lanna!
Uamhar alla,
Air dhath na fala,
Taog o'n chala gun deifinn.
'Taom, a Loddie'
Eisoch do chorruigh,

'S lion le oghlin' chd
 Aisling's brollach na Feine.
 N am fradharc cirich
 A'd chruth eittí';
 Torian fheileabha
 'S lasair speur ga d' cho'dhich.
 A cheo na Lanna
 Aon nan cara';
 'S Luair an cadal
 A chruth Ladda nan leir-chreath.

† The poet here means the Druids. It would appear from the following lines, that they had the art of kindling some sulphureous matter, in order to strike terror into their enemies by that phenomenon. See *History of the Druids*, p. 73.

shakes his arm, and tosses on earth his heavy spear. Quivering it stands. Its studs tremble in moon-beams that glitter through oaken trees. We saw the thoughts of battle and of grief shake, by turns, his soul. The ghost of his father came. On a dark cloud that obscured the moon, he thoughtful leaned. He appeared like the gray-musing son of a rock, when his thoughts are of other worlds *. His red hair streams on winds; and his sighs are heard, like the voice of the breeze in Lego's reedy banks, when the ghosts of the dead wander there in mournful mists, without their fame.

THE shield of Fingal sounds. The hills with all their rocks reply. The roes hear it, and start from their mossy bed. The fowls hear it, and shake, in the desart-tree, their fluttering wing. The wolf, wanderer of night, hath heard it, as he made for the slaughtered field, in hopes of prey. Sadly growling, he returns to his den; his hungry eye is red.—Shun his path, ye children of the deer.

WE directed our steps to the king. Suloicha looked if the gray stars had retired in the east. His foot stumbled; it was on one of Dargo's chiefs. At the side of a gray rock he leaned. Half a shield is the pillow on which rests his head; over it wanders in blood his hair.—Why, he said, do thy wandering steps disturb the warrior's repose, when he can no longer lift the spear? Why didst thou banish, like a blast of the desart, my dream; for I had seen the lovely Roscana? My soul might have fled with the beam of my love; why didst thou call it back from its flight?

P p

WHAT

* By this is meant either a contemplative Culdee or Druid.

WHAT was that beam of thy love, Roscana? replied Suloicha*. Was she fair as the down of the mountain; were her eyes like stars that sparkle through the thin shower; was her voice like the harp of Ullin; were her steps like the wave of the breeze, when it softly pours on the scarce-bending grafts; and her form like the moon failing in silence from cloud to cloud, in the calm of night? Didst thou find her, like the swan, borne on the breast of the wave; lovely, though lonely, in her grief?—Yes, thou didst; and that Roscana was mine. Stranger, what hast thou done with my love?—

“ ON the bosom of the wave I found the fair. In her skiff she had been failing to the cave of her isle. There, she said, a chief of Morven was to meet her. But he did not come. I solicited her love, and invited her to I-una’s plain. For three moons she bade me wait. Suloicha, she said, perhaps may come. Faster than the last moon she pined away. Before its light was quite gone, she failed. Like the green pine of I-una, which withered in its youth, she failed: its branches, by the blast, are left bare, and the children of music forsake its boughs.—On the shore of the isle, I raised the tomb of the fair. Two gray stones are there half-sunk in earth. A yew spreads its dark branches nigh: a murmuring fount breaks from the ivy rock above, and bathes the foot of the mournful tree. There sleeps the lovely Roscana. There the mariner, when he moors his vessel in the stormy night, beholds her fair ghost, enrobed in the whitest of the mountain-mist. ‘ Thy form,’ he says, ‘ is lovely, O Roscana; fairer than my fails is the cloud of thy robe.’—Such have I seen her now in my dream; why

was

* *Suloicha*, “one that sees well at night;” *Roscana*, “fair countenance.”

was not my soul allowed to fly with the lovely beam of light? Come back to my dreams, O Roscana; thou art a beam of light, when all is dark around!"

CHIEF of I-una, thou hast raised the tomb of my love! If no herb of the mountain can heal thy wounds, thy gray stone and thy fame shall rise on Morven.—Roscana! hast thou pined for me? Young tree of Moi-ura, are all thy green branches withered?—The wars of Fingal called me; I sent the scout; but neither his skiff nor he have since been seen. In the morning, my first look was on the deep; and in the evening the last cast of my eye was on the main. Through night, my head leaned over the rock; but I beheld Roscana only in my dream. Chief of I-una!—but thy voice has failed. Thy face, amidst moon-beams, is pale: thy eyes are flames that are dead. Friend of my Roscana! thy tomb shall rise.

LIKE the fall of a lofty oak in the calm gathering of night, when the woods and rocks shake with the sound, the shield of the king again is heard. It calls his people together. We bend on our spears with the steps of speed; our way is by the tomb of Curach.—Who mourns in silence on its green turf? he heeds not either the shield of the king, or the gray dawn of the morning. It is Coffagalla. He missed his master at home. His ears are up, upon his rock: he sniffs the wind in all its points: he turns to every breeze that shakes the tufted grafts; but his master is not there. No rustling leaf, no sparrow's wing in the wood, stirs unobserved by Coffagalla. But Curach is not come. He seeks his steps in the battle. He finds his hand on the edge of the stream: the foam around it is stained with blood. Mournful he bears it with him,

and his stream of tears descend. He lights, as he walks along, on Curach's grave. On his breast, above it, the white-footed dog is stretched. Under his neck lies the arm.—I see him as I pass: the tear is in my eye: I think of the white-breasted dog and Oscar *.—A moment I lean on the head of my spear: the crowding of grief hath swelled my soul. But I must not forget the battle. I step aside to bring the mourner with me; but he will not come. Three times his howl is heard; his foul in the cry is gone. Ah! thou art cold as the clay of earth; no breath is in Coffagalla. Why this dimness of my sight? My soul of battle fails. But the shield again awakes it. His heroes are gathered around the king.

LIKE the many rays of the sun glittering through the watery cloud, when the hunter fears the storm; so, thick rise before Comhal's son the gleaming spears of Morven and Innisfail. Curach is low. A thousand heroes look in silence on Fingal. Who shall have the battle?—Fergus stands behind: no field of such fame had yet been his. In his hand he holds his spear: without thought he tears away the rough beard of its shaft; the mark of its strife in war. His breast beats with hope. Battles swell in his soul: the blood glows in all his veins. His eyes are two stars in watery mist,

when

* Alluding to the death of Oscar, and the grief of Bran on that occasion; a scene so affecting, that few passages of Ossian are oftener repeated than that which describes it in these beautifully-tender lines, which I may be pardoned for giving in the original, as the translation is already so well known.

—Chruinnich iad uime na fluaigh,
S gach aon neach ri buirich thruaigh;
Cha chaoineadh A' hair a mhac fein,
S cha ghuileadh a luirathair e:

*Cha chaoineadh piuthar a brathair,
'S cha chaoineadh mathair a muc;
—Ach iad uile anns a phiosgail,
A geur-choaine' mo chaomh Oscar.*

• • • • •
“ Donnalaich nan con rem thaobh,
Agus buirich nan sean Laoch,
Gul a phannail fo co snitheach,
Sud is mo a chraidh mo chroidhe.
Cha d' fhidir duine roimhe riabh
Gur croidhe feola bl' ann am chliabh;
Ach croidhe do chuibhne cuir,
Air a chudach a le stailinn,” &c.

TEMORA, DR. I.

when the night is silent, and the winds are retired to the desert. Over heroes that stand between, they view the mild face of Fингal.

WHERE, said the king, is the young eagle that rushed so late, with rustling wings, through the paths of danger? No light staff in a boy's hand was thy spear, my son; it was no thistle's down with which it strewed the field. I see its beamy shaft marked with the scars of battle.—This day, be thou first in danger and in fame. Near thee, on his rock, shall be the steps of thy father: be like the eagle among the fowls of the heath, strong-winged son of Morven.—Bid the mighty bow before thee, but bind up the wounds of the feeble. The fame of heroes grows, as fall before them the proud in arms. But if the blood of a low-laid foe is on their spear, bards give their name no room in the song, and heroes turn away on their gray clouds when their ghosts appear in the course of winds. Fergus, spare the low; but when the mighty oppose, be thy arm like a grove on fire. My voice on the heath shall be a breeze; it shall raise on high the flame.

LIKE the dark-rolling of a tempest, when it shakes the deep with all its isles, and heaves the white-headed billows, like mountains of snow, upon the shore of rocks; so Cuthon with his host came on. The aged hunter hears the sound, as he rises in the woody vale, from the foot of a rock, on the mossy bed where slept the roe. He turns about his ear. “ It may be the deep murmur of thunder, rolling along the distant heath; but I see not the lightning, in its course, appear.—It is,” then he faith, “ the tempest of ocean: I will ascend the rock and behold its terrors.”—He climbs the gray rock; but the face of the blue sea is calm: the sun lifts half his face above the

the eastern hill; his beams glitter, through the warm shower, on the gray beard of the hunter, as he leans forward on his spear, listening to the growing din.—He sees the host of Cuthon. “ Shall I not rush,” he says to his soul, “ to the aid of Morven ?”—Thou needest not, fighter of the wars that are past: thou mayest wait on thy rock till the strife is over; for the warriors of the king are many, going down in their terrible joy.—See ! Fergus moves with kindled wrath before them, tall as a ghost of the desart, when he comes shaking the waving heath with his steps. He catches the green groves, as he passes, in his hands, and overturns them in his sport, as the whistling boy lops, with his playful staff, the flowers. In his head is the voice of thunder; his eye is the place of the lightning, and meteors form his waving hair. The nations see it, and tremble.—So moves Fergus. A troubled cloud behind him move his heroes.

THE battle joins. Moruth shakes. The sound of shields, the crash of spears, and the voice of bards, ascend. Whales tremble on their waves. Roes bound towards the desart. Fowls, on their rustling wings, fly over their mountains; or, trembling, fall with fear*. The white-handed daughters of the bow are asleep on their mountain of groves: they hear their noise, as they pass thro' pines over their booth: their dreams of danger rise; they draw their veil over their head, and tremble for heroes.—Nor is your trembling without cause, white-handed huntresses of Moruth;

many

* The Galic reader will wish to see these lines in their native terror.

Le fgeadail an laana gribha
'S le caoiribh teine o'n cruidh arna;
Chuir iad iasg nan cuantaidh fluadhach,

Ann an caoilete caola fuara.
Chuir iad seidh nam beanntaidh arda
Gus na gleanntaidh fuara fafail;
'S eunlaith bhinn-fhoelach nan coilteach,
Anns na speuran le crith-oille.

many of your heroes are low, and shall no more pursue the deer.—Many rills wander red on Moruth's heath: many a tall tree strews all its branches there. Heroes lie, like groves overturned by the lightning: their green branches shake their sickly heads in all the winds.

Two eagles rush from opposite rocks, and fight on the dark pillar of a cloud between. The blast tosses them from side to side, and the rustling of their wings is heard afar by quaking birds. These eagles are Fergus and Cuthon, in the midst of their strife of steel. Long and terrible is the combat of the chiefs; but neither this nor that prevails. A son of Loda lifts, at length, his spear between. “Why should not,” he says, “the hawk of heaven feast on the son of the king?”—Die thou, but not for the hawk, said Fergus, as quick he lifts above him his blasting steel. His head, fixed in the helmet, falls muttering to the earth, and marking, in its way, his own blue shield. The body still had stood, propped by the pitched spear.

FINGAL beheld the danger of his son, and half he drew his sword. But still he stands in his place. “Why should I deprive the young hero of his fame; why should I make the mother of Fergus sad on her cloud?—No; beam of my early love, let not thy face be dark; our son shall yet prevail.”

A GHOST of other times is riding by, on his wind. He sees with wonder the terrible strife of the warriors. “They resemble,” he says, “the heroes that have been *.” He alights from the car of winds. He descends with all his clouds, and stands on the heath

to

* That predilection in favour of former times, so common with old men in this life, is here very naturally ascribed by the poet to a being of another state.

to gaze on the strife of heroes. The ghost, with his mist, hides his son from the king; nor did many of the people see their chief.

FINGAL trembled for his hero. He rushed in all his terrors from his place; like the boar of Gormul, when, wandering on the heath for food, he fees the steps of the hunter towards the place of his young. The rocks hear his voice, and shake with all their branchy trees.—So shook the voice of Fingal the rocks of Moruth; and his bard poured before him, like the roar of a red mountain-stream, the song.—Morven kindled, like the decaying fire, on the heath of Lora, when the spear of the hunter stirs it, and all the winds are awake. It spreads its flames from hill to hill: its columns of dark-curling smoke, with all their thundering noise, ascend. Ghosts sport in its clouds, and pass through the darkness of its flame. The roe hears its sound at a distance. She thinks of her son in his mossy bed. The big tear trickles from her eye. She flies to look for his safety.

THE people of Cuthon fled, or fell. We pursued them over the stream of Moruth. Cuthon himself stood, wounded, in his place, like a rock which the sea hath half-consumed below. The mariner, as he passes, fears its fall, though still it seems to defy the storm.—He saw the coming of the king, and grasped with joy his spear. But Fingal saw his blood, and would not lift the sword. Sullen, after his people, he retired. His steps are slow through Moruth. The furthest bank is steep. Its face he thrice attempts to climb; but thrice in the attempt he fails. He clings by a withered thistle; but it yields.—Backward in the stream the mighty falls!—Moruth sounds along its winding course, like the fall of rocks with their

shaggy

shaggy woods, when the thunder rolls above them in clouds, and the valleys, with all their herds, are trembling.

WE flew on our spears to assist the chief: but his face was pale, and the darkness of death was gathering about him, a night without moon or stars.

AND art thou fallen, said Fingal with a sigh, art thou fallen, who hast this day been so mighty?—How fleeting is the life of the warrior!—In the morning he goes forth to strew the plain; but his friends receive him a clay-cold corse at night!—His aged mother and spouse of love prepare the feast, around the blazing oak. At times, they listen for his return. The tread of feet is in their ear; the pale moon points out the crowd. “He comes!” they say, as with joy they rush forth.—They meet his bier!—The life of the warrior is a wintery day; short, dark: its streaks of light on the heath are few.—Fergus, bid the friends of Cuthon take him. Bid them also, this night, partake of the feast of Fingal; the deer of their own hills are distant.

CUTHON heard the king, and reached his hand; while a few words trembled on his lips. “Fergus, take thou that shield; Fingal, king of heroes, be thine the rod *. My soul mounts on the meteor’s wing † to the abode of the brave and good. With my

Q q

fathers

* The Druids, and most other pretenders to supernatural power, are said to have worn a white rod, called *Slatan drui'achd*, i. e. the *Druid’s rod*, or *magic wand*. The virtues ascribed to this weapon were so great, that we may suppose it would not be forgot in a day of battle. But whether it is this precious wand, or his spear, that Cuthon is here resigning to Fingal, cannot be determined with

certainty, though the first is most probable from the name in the original:

Gabhfa Fhear'ais mo fglia
'S aig Fionn nam fiann biadh an t'fhat.
See *Hist. of the Druids*, p. 10.

† Tha m'anams' air rioluin a triall
Gu ionada fal nam flath.

That souls on their departure from the body take their flight to the other world in such vehicles, is an opinion which still prevails, in some measure, among the

fathers let my body be placed : let our rest be together in the green isle."

WE move to the feast along the heath. We discover through the trees, the steps of age. It was the feeble hunter on the rock ; he who trembled for Morven's heroes. Thrice had he tried to toss the spear on which he leaned, and thrice his sighs arose. He felt the trembling of age on his hand, and saw his locks white with the snow of years, as with them he wiped away the tear that dimmed his sight.—But when the danger of Morven grew, his youth returned, and all the thoughts of feeble age were forgot. He ran to aid them from his rock. He saw, when he came near, the strife was over ; and returned again, low-humming the song, to his wood. The robe of other years, we saw, had failed. His worn-out shield and gray beard, supply along the breast its want. Behind, it is also torn ; but the skin of a boar conceals the rent.—“ Bring,” said the king, “ to the needy this robe ; and bid him come with our people to the feast.”—“ The garment,” he replied, “ the gift of the king, I take ; but cannot wait, this day, for his feast.”

FINGAL knew the voice of Lugar ; he knew the gray dog of his friend. He went with his wonted joy to meet him ; but bade his people stand away, that the aged might not blush.—Chief of Moi-allin, he said, where so long hast thou been ? I rejoice to see the friend of my youth. A hundred fair cows, with all their calves, thou gavest me then on Drimcola's heath. Twenty horses also

were

the vulgar Highlanders, who generally believe that certain meteors, to which they give the name of *Dr'euig*, portend the death of eminent persons. This Druidical notion, with several others, owes its long continuance to the frequent repetition of Ossian's poems.

* The

were thy gift, the children of the rein ; and five ships, safe riders of the sea, with all their sails and nodding masts. The like boon, Lugar, shall now be thine. No generous deed shall ever be forgot by Fingal.

I AM not Lugar, the aged replies : I had rather die without a friend to lay me in the narrow house, than take the bounty, due only to him, in his stead *.

—“ To thee it is due ; and thine shall be the gift. But first thou shalt, for seven days, prolong in Selma the feast. Seven heroes shall then guide thee home. They will remain in Moi-allin to smooth the road before thy aged feet ; to ward off every rougher blast that might toss thy gray hairs.”

FINGAL led the aged by the hand. We pursued our way with the people of Cuthon, to the feast. A gray stone met us on the heath ; and the words of peace were heard from Lugar.

Q q 2

“ WHY

* The attachment of Lugar to his friends was great, when it made him forget all the feeblenes of age, and rush down, with the ardour of a youthful warrior, to battle. But his modesty under his reverse of fortune, and the spirit with which he bore his poverty, are more striking features in his character. The generosity and delicacy with which he is treated by Fingal are no less remarkable. *Dan Liughair*, or “ the song of Lugar,” beginning with

La gan dechaidh Fionn do thigh Le'ir

Fu lionar ann ecir agus fion, &c.

is still a favourite of all admirers of ancient Galic poetry ; and is so sure to meet with the approbation of the hearers, that a sentence to that purpose, supposed to have been first spoke by some Culdee, or son of the rock, to whom Ossian repeated

it, is generally added to it.

“ *Mile beannachd dhuit gach re,*
Oflinn theilidh is binne gloir ;
Arfon aon sgeoil co maith blagh
Sa dh' airis thu riabh red' bheo.”

The modest shyness of Lugar is still highly characteristic of the generality of his countrymen, who wear the best face in the world under the galling load of oppression and the pinching rigours of poverty. With the greatest industry they conceal from all about them how small a *handful of meal is in the barrel*, giving cheerfully away, to the very last, a share of it. And there have been frequent instances of nobody's knowing that the *little oil in the cruise* was spent, till the lamp of life, for want of a supply, was quite extinguished.

* The

“ Why,” he said, “ should they who go together to the feast meet in battle any more? Why should the voice of strife be heard among the race of those who reaped the field together, in the years that are long since past; among the race of those who now ride, hand in hand, upon their clouds; never sad but when they see the war of their sons. Raifethis gray stone, the daughter of the rock, on the heath of Moruth. The children of the years to come shall mark it. They will ask the aged warrior what it means. ‘ Lead me,’ he will say, ‘ to the place.’—With short, equal steps, they walk beside him. The blunt spear supports his hand; and his gray dog, blind with years, attends his steps. The evening is calm. The song of birds is in the woods; the voice of hinds is on the hill; but the aged hears them not. The sun is bright as it goes down. He half-sees the parting beam: its rays are glittering in his few gray hairs. In two white, parted locks, like mine, they hang before him, as he lowly stoops, and wave around the blunted spear.—He hath reached the place; he hath felt, with joy, the stone. ‘ It is,’ he cries, ‘ the stone of Moruth!—Here,’ leaning to it his weary back, he adds, ‘ here your fathers met in peace: they laid their hands together to rear this gray stone. Forget not, children, the peace of your fathers; remember it when you behold the stone of Moruth *—Speak, O stone, to the years that

* The custom of setting up such pillars to ratify agreements and to commemorate them, seems to have generally prevailed among ancient nations. We find frequent instances of it in Scripture: (see Gen. 31. 51. and Joth. 24. 26.) The *πέρατοι*, *Fauni*, *Termini*, all the Mercurial heaps and pillars among the ancient Greeks and Romans, and those pillars

which the old Ethiopians and Arabs held in such veneration, had probably the same origin. The excessive regard paid to these objects, and the custom of calling them to witness their most solemn protestations, led men by degrees to think there resided in them some divinity. The little heaps or mounts called *Sc-dhuin*, or *hills of peace*, so frequent in the Highlands,

that wander beyond the sun, and shall not for ages come forward to hear its morning voice: tell them, and the children who shall behold them, that here we bade the battle cease.—Let the mists of years cover thee, thou sign of peace on Moruth; let the ghosts of the dead defend thee. Let no unfriendly hand; no stormy blast, while Moruth's heath shall last, or that dark stream shall run, come nigh thee!"

THE night was spent in the feast. With morning the people of Cuthon retired. The bards raised the mournful song to their chief; nor were the harps of Morven silent.

CUTHON! thy arm was mighty, and thy soul of battle great. Often have I seen thee hover, a dark cloud from ocean's mist, above the field of thy fame. But now I see thee not; though at times I hear thy blast in the gray hair of Moruth's pine. I hear thee, when I sit beneath it, as now, in the gathering of the evening shades, and listen to the murmur of the passing stream.—Sweet is thy nightly song, O stream; sweet is thy hum in the wandering of thy course.

BUT it is late, and the bard will retire from the storm of night; for the rustling wing of the heath-cock, lighting on his mossy bed, is heard. Is not that his voice, bidding his mate to haste her home?—Mate of mine! Evirallin! the time hath been when thus I cried, from my booth, to thee. Now I cry; but there is no friend to answer, save the mimic rock, and the voice of the hollow stream. Fingal is with his fathers. Oscar is no more. Evirallin

lands, are still approached with awe, and fions; and probably contributed much to supposed to be inhabited by *genii*.—They maintain among them peace and good were generally situated on the boundaries between different clans and posies.

† In

is in her cloud ; and the voice of Malvina is silent *. My fathers, when shall Ossian be with you ? My friends, when shall the bard join you ? When shall the short days, the long nights of my many-coloured life be over ? My friends are gone : their memory, like the stones of their tomb, is half funk ; and the place of their abode is desolate.

BUT such changes are not the lot of the bard alone. Lugar ! thou hast had thy share. I have seen the heroes feast in thy hall. Thy lights of wax were many ; and plentiful was thy feast of shells. Though a cold, shapeless ruin now, thy palace was then the abode of a king †.—Such have I seen the dwelling of Lugar. But as the warm season, in the rolling of years, is changed ; Lugar wandering, with his spouse, in want again was seen.—I passed through Moi-allin's vale ‡ : but the house of Lugar was empty.

The

* In the following poem Malvina is a speaker ; so that it seems to have been composed before this.

† The whole contrast of this passage is beautiful ; but the two lines of which this sentence is a translation are exceedingly striking, as the opposition is so quick, and a group of interesting images are strongly painted in them, with only a single touch.

Ged tha e 'n diugh na aibhist shuair,
Eha e uair a b' aros Righ !

‡ Perhaps there was never any language better adapted for poetry than the Galic, as almost all its words are not only energetical, and descriptive of the objects they represent, but are also, for the most part, an echo to the sense. Harsh ob-

jects are denoted by harsh sounds, in which the consonants greatly predominate ; whilst soft and tender objects and passions are expressed by words which bear some analogy to them in sound, and which consist, for the greatest part, of vowels. Hence, in the hand of a skilful poet, the sound varies perpetually with the subject of discourse, and assumes the tone of whatever passion he is at the time inspired with. Any person acquainted with the Galic, will see the justness of this remark, from the different specimens inserted in the course of these notes. It is generally so obvious, that a stranger to the language may observe it, notwithstanding the number of quiescent consonants which oppress the Galic. In p. 244, for instance, the “ hoarse-roaring of a wave

The kid of the roe fed on its green top where inward it fell, in the hall of heroes. The owl, in his window, covered her head with the ivy-branch; and the swallow fluttered around her. The deer cool their sides in the stream before his door; and seem as if they were musing on his lot.—Sons of the mountain, have you seen Lugar? Ah! you are glad, for his shafts will no more disturb you.—But yourselves, like him, shall one day fail. Your companions will look for you in the vale which you used to haunt. Your sons will shake their heads, for they know not where to find you.

VARIOUS, O life, like the seasons of the year, are thy changes! Once, I smiled in the summer of youth; and laughed, like thee, tall pine, at the winter's storm. My leaf like thine, I said, shall always be green, and my branches in age shall flourish. But now my withered arms are bared of all their leaves; and my gray hair, like thine own, is the sport of winds, and trembles in every blast.

TALL

wave on a rock" is described by words which present the letter *r* in almost every syllable:

—stairrich

Measg charraige cruaidh a garraich.

And a similar idea is expressed much in the same manner in p. 247:

Gan ruaga le stóirm toirt nuanan

A'ir carraig chruaidh meadhon-braach.

On the contrary, any person who turns his eye to the specimens in p. 145 and 202, where the poet is under the influence of some of the softer feelings, will find the most predominant sounds to be *ci*, *ao*, *ai*, *eo*, *eo*, and the like.—The original of the passage which gave rise to

this note, is added as a further illustration of the remark. Grief is the predominant passion in it; and *ai*, *iu*, *ua*, *uai*, &c. are the predominant sounds.

A' siubhal gleannan na Moi'luin
 Fhuaras na fhafach tigh Liughair,
 Minnein na h-earb' air a dhrum uaine,
 'Sa fuaine finte 's an fhardaich aoibhein.
 Na uinnaig bha inn na h-o'i'che,
 'S eighéann a' cuir duibhr' air aghaidh,
 An gothan ga chuartach; 's na eisr-aighean
 Beul a thighe 's an t-futh, fui smairein.
 A filiochd nan flioblte, 'm faca sibh Liughair.
 Ach 's cubhaidh ger ait leibh nach beo e.
 Ach failnichidh fíbhsé mar eisín,
 'S biaidh ar daimhich aon latha gar feoruich.
 Crathaidh ar clann an cinn le smaolán;
 Cho'n aithne dhoibh gleann ar co'nuidh.

TALL pine of Moruth, we have once seen better days; but they have fled, on their darkly-silent wing, over the heath to the defart.

THE

THE F A L L O F T U R A :

A P O E M *.

THE A R G U M E N T.

FINGAL, on his return from an excursion which he had made to the Roman province, is received by the congratulatory song of the virgins in his palace of Tura. While they are at the feast, a bard arrives to intreat the aid of Fingal in behalf of Ci-va-dona, whose story is told. In the morning a party set out on this expedition, while the rest pursue the chase, leaving only the women and children at home, with Gara to attend them hard by, in case of any alarm or danger. Unfortunately the house took fire, while they were asleep; and all that were in it perished. This loss is described, and pathetically lamented, by Ossian; and by Malvina, to whom the poem is addressed in the beginning, and who bears a part in the end of it.

WHO comes, pouring his voice on the night? Art thou a ghost that hast not received thy fame? Is thy wandering still on the vapour of the fenny mist; and dost thou come with thy complaint to Ossian's ear?—Pour thy voice, then, son of night! my ear, within its gray lock, leans forward to thy tale. Pour thy voice, ghost of night! that the bard may know thy name.

R r

THE

* This poem is known by the names of *Losga Taura*, and *Laoidh Ghara's nam ban*, “The burning of Tura,” or “The elegy on Gara and the maids of Morven.” The unfortunate accident which it records, partly accounts for the sudden de-

cline of the bard's family and friends.— The latter part of the poem is generally repeated as a separate piece, by the title of *Ossian a' caoi' nam Fiann*, “The lament of Ossian for his friends.”

* Mal-

THE sound comes, growing on the wing of the rolling breeze. It comes, like the sigh of the mountain-stream that falls, between trees, from the height of rocks. It rises from its dark bed, at times, through the mist of foam, and reaches by halves the ear of the hunter. “Lora!” listening from his booth he says, “the voice of thy weary stream is sweet; I love the murmur of thy steps through the rocky vale, though it often foretels the storm.”

YES, hunter of roes, the evening voice of Lora is sweet; but sweeter far is that in Ossian’s ear. It is soft as the sound of departed bards in the gale of the reed. It is soft and mournful, as the song of Malvina when she sees the ghost of Oscar: the evening is calm, and the breeze scarce waves the down of the lonely thistle.—It is she; it is the love of my Oscar; Malvina, lonely bird *. She comes, like the moon on her solitary mountains, when her steps in clouds are slow, and her face through thin mist is pale. She comes, fair light, to mourn for her sisters’ fall. Their place is dark: the mark of their footsteps is lost, as the course of the stars that fell from their blue place in heaven; as the moon when she has retired within her dun robe in the sky.—Yes, Malvina, their place is dark; and the steps of thy grief, on the hill of heath, are lonely.

DAUGHTER of Toscar, bring my harp. Kindle the soul of the bard with thy voice of songs. Awake it from the slumber of years: the night of age is unlovely and dark. It is dark, Malvina; but thy song is a beam of light. Its sound is pleasant, as the harp of spirits

* Malvina, of whom Ossian speaks so often in his poems, was the love of his son Oscar, who died when he was very young. (Temora, B. i.) Ossian always treats her

with peculiar tenderness and affection; which she requited, to the very last, with the most dutiful and attentive regard.

* This

spirits on their gale, when they are seen at noon, on their white
ridgy mist, creeping along the silent-winding stream. Thy voice is
pleasant: join it to the harp: pour it on my ear, through night,
Malvina, lonely bird!

THE times that are past roll back, with their dim light, on the
soul of the bard.

WE returned in our fame from the field of Arda *. The steeds
of the stranger strode beneath us in their pride; and we rejoiced
in the greatness of our spoil. The setting sun was yellow on the
groves of the mountain; its beams on Tura were like the gold of
the stranger. The face of the lake below is calm. The children
admire the hills that hang beneath it, with their ivy-rocks in the
midst of woods. They wonder to see the blue smoke of Tura, there,
descend. The virgins of Morven stand, like rainbows, upon their
mountain. They see the steps of our return; and in the joy of
beauty they move to meet us. The sound of their hundred harps
is up. The songs of music, mixed with these, arise.

“ WHO comes,” they said, “ in the light of his strength; who
comes gleaming in his steel? The steed of the stranger is proud
beneath him: he paws with scorn the earth, and tosses on high his
gray mane. The clouds of smoke, like the blue curling pillars
that rise from Tura, fly, snorting, from his nostrils; and from
his mouth hangs the foam of the stream. His neck bends on high,
like the bow of the battle; and his two eyes are flames.—Who holds
the glittering reins of the steed? who but Fingal, king of men?—
Thy fame, O Fingal, is brighter around thee than sun-beams; in

R r 2

its

* The most of this paragraph, with some others that follow, particularly before and after the song of the old bard, have been supplied from the tales, as the versification is broken and defective.

* The

its light thy thousands rejoice. The smile of peace is on their brow: they are calm as the smooth lake. They are as the river of Cona in the evening of spring, when the children of the stream leap in air for the buzzing wing.—But they that are calm in peace, were a tempest in the strife of war. Before them, strangers of the distant land! you have fled: in their presence, kings of the world! you have trembled. Your warriors, without their steeds and bright arms, return. ‘Where,’ you say, ‘have you left your arms?’—Ask the sons of the mountain, they best can tell. Your own men are silent; they are ashamed: no bard gives their name to the song; no virgin comes, with her harp, to meet them. No; they weep in their secret halls, for their lovers have given their fame to Fingal. Yes, virgins of the distant land, you may weep: kings of the world, you may tremble. But Morven’s maids will rejoice; with the voice of songs and the harp they will hail their heroes †.”

Such was the song of Morven’s maids in the day of their joy; when the gladness of their face was like setting sun-beams on the mountain of groves, and their peace like the green leaf of the oak, when it hangs, unshaken, over Lubar. Nor did your harps sleep that

† The religion, laws, and customs of the Caledonians, had all a tendency to inculcate their grand maxim of *behaving valiantly in war*. Such especially was the tendency of these congratulatory songs of their fair ones when they returned in triumph. With the same view of animating them to a gallant behaviour, the ladies often followed them to the field of action, where they were sometimes more than mere spectators. In the passage cited

in the *Note*, p. 300, concerning the death of Oscar, there are, in almost all the editions I have met with of that piece, two lines (there marked in Italics) which intimate that their women were then present. The practice of other ancient and neighbouring nations gives a further probability to this custom, so different from the manners of modern times. See Lord Kaims’s *Sketches*, B. i. Sk. 7.

that night, O bards, on the walls of echoing Tura. Their joyful, trembling voice is up. Their sound at a distance is heard. The red oak is in a blaze; the spire of its flame is high. The traveller sees its light on the dusky heath, as night spreads around him her raven wings. He sees it, and is glad; for he knows the hall of the king. 'There,' he says to his companion, 'we pass the night. The door of Fingal is always open. The name of his hall is, The stranger's home *.'

THE feast is spread. The king wonders that no stranger from the darkly heath is come. "I will listen," he says, "if I may hear their wandering steps." He goes. An aged bard meets him at the door. On less than half a spear he leans his bending weight. No steel glitters on his blunt spear: for the days of his strife are past; his battles are all fought, and their noise is over.

THE king, with joy, led the stranger in. We saw his grief-red eye bedimmed with tears: we saw their path on his furrowed cheek. His few gray hairs hang, a thin, twisted lock on either side, and mingle with the white beard on his breast. A youth stands behind him: his down-cast face is the bed of grief: he bears the harp of the bard.

WE rise to give the strangers place. We bid them partake of our feast that smokes around. We bid the light of our joy
dif-

* Hospitality is one of those virtues which lose ground in proportion as civilization advances. It still subsists to a high degree in the Highlands; though vanishing so fast, that, in some years hence, its existence in some parts may be as much doubted as that of some other virtues ascribed by Ossian to his heroes. It is not

many years since it was the general practice to look out every evening, whether any stranger appeared, before the doors were shut. When any had cast up, the host had manifestly more pleasure in giving, than the guest in receiving, the entertainment.

Sed tempora mutantur, et nos mutamur in illis.

* Si-

dispel their cloud of grief, and shine through the mist on their soul. But they were like the gray cloud of the morning, which climbs not half the mountain, though the sun in his brightness shines around.

THE aged, at length, took his harp, and poured in our listening ear his song.

“ SITHAMA was a chief of other lands. His halls lifted their heads on Gormluba’s banks, and saw their gray towers in its blue winding stream. Mountains spread their arms around the place, and aged woods defend it from the storm. Here, fifty times, the oak dropt its withered leaf on Sithama’s head; and as oft bade he the people mark how fast their days decline. ‘ We wither,’ he would say, ‘ as the grafts of the mountain; we fade as the leaf of the oak. Four are the seasons of life, and restless they roll as those of the year. Some fall in youth, as the bud that is killed by the blast: others are like the leaf over which the mildew hath passed in the fultry day. Many fall, like my departed love, in the sickly autumn; and a few remain, like myself, till the winter of age. Since our season then is so uncertain, let us be renowned, he would say, while we may *.’

“ The deer of his own hills sufficed Sithama: he fought not to drink, fave of his own blue stream. When the feeble sought his help,

* Sithama seems to have been of the sect of the Druids. His parabolical manner of conveying instruction is agreeable to the most ancient times, and to those ænigmatical apophthegms which Laërtius ascribes particularly to the Druids. If the whole of this order were obnoxious

to Fingal, their confidence of his readiness to redress the wrongs done even to one of them, and the alacrity with which he undertook it, reflect the greatest honour on his character. The highest heroism is to be above revenge, and to subdue one’s enemies by kindness.

help, his blade leapt out of its dark sheath, and shone in their aid. The helpless staid behind his shield, and said, Here we are safe.

“ The strife of friends arose. Duarma seeks the fall of his brother. The injured obtains Sithama’s aid. But the gloomy Duarma prevails. Talmo falls in blood; and Sithama, the friend of the feeble, fails!—Duarma comes to Gormluba’s streams. The son of Sithama is young. He admires the boss of the broad shield on the wall, and asks how the spear of battle is lifted. Over the heath he sees the strangers come, as night descends upon the grove. Short, but fast, are his steps to meet them: for Crigal had the soul of his father; he rejoiced in the presence of the stranger, as the green branch in the shower of the spring. He sees the face of Duarma dark; but he reaches his little hand. ‘ The feast,’ he says, ‘ is spread; why should thy face be mournful?’ Duarma makes no reply; but his spear on high is lifted. The youth attempts to fly; but alas! he flies in vain. Across the threshold of his father he is stretched. His soul comes, red, through the path of the spear.—His sister, from her window, sees Duarma’s wrath. What shall the helpless Civa-dona do?—‘ Aged bard, canst thou not help me?’ —The withered arm of the bard is propped by half a spear.—She wildly turns her to the other side. The window is there, from which virgins oft beheld their face of beauty in the flood. From its height she throws herself into Gormluba’s stream. The bard with his harp goes, trembling, to the door. His steps are like the warrior of many years, when he bears, mournful, to the tomb the son of his son. The threshold is slippery with Crigal’s wandering blood; across it the aged falls. The spear of Duarma over him is

lifted;

lifted ; but the dying Crigal tells, ‘ It is the bard *.’—A gray dog comes howling by, and in his side receives the spear.—The hall is on fire. Its flames are moon-beams in the vale. The bard seeks Civa-dona with their light, and finds her clung to a branch that wandered across the stream. Crigal is laid in his silent bed, and Civa-dona is clad in his robes. She goes with the bard to seek for aid.—King of Morven, the unhappy two are before thee ; give the young and the old thine aid.”

THE bard ceased. The burst of his grief arose. With the virgin-sisters of Morven Civa-dona retired. She retired, like a star behind its cloud, after its watery face hath sparkled a little through the storm. In her brother’s robe, where it veiled her head, we saw the marks of Duarma’s spear.

THE tear starts into the eye of the king. With his gray lock he wipes it off. His heroes forget the feast. “ Reach me,” said Fresdal, “ my spear.”

“ THE day lifts above the hill his gray head †. Our course shall be to Ardven’s chase. Ten heroes shall visit thence Duarma’s hall : and the youth who wins her love, shall remain with Civa-dona.”

WE flew, light as ghosts when they retire from day. Gara alone remains at Tura ; that no wandering foe may alarm our maids.—Daughter of Toscar, why that burst of grief? Their hall is the house of joy yet. Dry, then, Malvina, thy tears, and give the rest of the tale to the song.—The song of grief is a stream, O Malvina! It melts the soul of the mighty, and carries it along in its darkly course. Its murmur, though sad, is pleasant.

DOST

* The character and person of the bard were always held sacred even by the most unsparing cruelty.

† Fingal speaks.

DOST thou not remember, Malvina, the beauty of the stranger, when the brightness of the day arose, and the sun shone on the heathy hill? Yes; for thou didst attend her, on thy steed to Ardven, and then pursue the chase with the king. It was then we beheld the beauty of Civa-dona, when thou didst retire, like the moon, behind thy mountains. She shone, like a bright star over the broken edge of a cloud; but who could admire that star, when the full unclouded moon was seen?—Yet the star of Gormluba was fair.—White were the rows within her lips*; and like the

S f

down

* The poet carries the description of this lady to an unusual length, either to divert, for a little, Malvina's grief; or to pay the greatest compliment he could to her beauty, by giving such a portrait of one whom he allows her to have so far excelled. The original is beautiful; but has had the misfortune to be considered as only ideal; insomuch that it has got the name of *Aisling air dhreach mnai*, or “The vision of the beautiful woman.” Such as think it a trespass, will, it is hoped, forgive the inserting it here, for the sake of its admirers.

Innseam pairt do dhreach na reul :
 Bu gheal a deud, gu hur dlu.
 'S mar chanach an t-fleibhe,
 Bha a cneas fa h eide' ur.
 Bha a braighe cearclach ban.
 Mar sheachda tla 's an fhireach,
 Bha da chich air a h uchd ciat'ach :
 Be'n dreach sud miann gach fir.
 Eu shoithe' binn a gloir,
 Sbu deirge nan ros a beul.
 Mar chobhar fios ra taobh
 Sinnte gu caol bha 'lamh.
 Bha 'da chaol-nihala mhíne,
 Du'-dhonn air liobh an loin.
 A da ghrualdh air dhreach nan caoran,
 "Si gu biomlan fíor o chroin.

Bha a gnuis mar bhara-gheuga
 Anns a cheud-fhas ur.
 A folt buidhe mar orra-shleibhte ;
 Smar dlearfa greine a suil,

A later poet has been so struck with this description, that, on hearing it, he naturally expressed his desire of being made happy by such a beauty; “ for whose love he would render more than love; for whose regard he would render more than regard; and always maintain an affection, which in the longest revolution of days and nights, he promised, should neither decay nor abate.”---As these lines are in the same measure with the description of the lady, they are generally repeated along with it, as if they had been originally joined to it.

'S truagh nach misé am fear,
 Annir nan rosg mall,
 D'an tiubhra tusa gradh
 Is bheirinn a dha da chionn.
 Bheirinn gaol thar ghaol,
 Bheirinn gradh thar ghradh ;
 Bheirinn run thar run,
 Is mein thar mein a ghna ;
 'S nam biodh do chroidhe neo'fhuar,
 Gun ghluafad as a chaoidh',
 Bheirinnse dhuit gradh
 Nach crionadh a la na dh'oidhche.

down of the mountain, under her new robe was her skin. Circle on circle formed her fairest neck. Like hills, beneath their soft snowy fleeces, rose her two breasts of love. The melody of music was in her voice. The rose, beside her lip, was not red ; nor white, beside her hand, the foam of streams.—Maid of Gormluba, who can describe thy beauty ! Thy eye-brows, mild and narrow, were of a darkish hue ; thy cheeks were like the red berry of the mountain ash. Around them were scattered the blossoming flowers on the bough of the spring.—The yellow hair of Civa-dona was like the gilded top of a mountain, when golden clouds look down upon its green head, after the sun has retired. Her eyes were bright as sun-beams ; and altogether perfect was the form of the fair.---Heroes beheld, and blessed her.

WE reached the hall of Duarma ; but he was fled : he had heard of the fame of Morven. The elbow of his father leaned on a gray stone, as he lay along it on earth. His head hangs down on his hand ; and his gray beard is strewed in dust. His sighs are deep on the wind ; and his dim, tearful eye is red. He hears the rustling of our feet near Talmo's tomb.---“ My son, my son,” he cries, “ it is pleasant to be so nigh the tread of thy ghost ! ”---We felt for the aged ; we left him a part of the spoil.

WE reached the place where Sithama dwelt : but it was dark and desolate. The fox started from its ruins ; and the owl rested in the cleft of its broken wall. We looked for the window from which the fair had escaped ; but it was fallen. The white stream leapt, roaring, over its heap of stones. We saw where the threshold had been marked with Crigal's blood. It had rested in the hollow that was worn in the stone by the frequent foot of guests.---Civa-dona

was

was sad ; but we left Fresdal to cheer her : it was he who had won her love.

FINGAL still waits us on Ardven. There we partake of his feast of deer.---Night comes : sleep descends : ghosts rise with all their mournful forms in our dreams. The harps of their bards are like the song of the tomb ; their sound comes to our ear like the mountain-sigh, when it is heard from afar before the storm. Over us, in dark shapeless mist, they hang. The blast in frequent eddies comes : it rolls before it all their limbs. But still the forms return. They bend over us, leaning from the breast of their cloud ; and often they heave the sigh.

THE sleep of the king was fled. Thrice had the faint howlings of ghosts awaked him. He ascends the hill to hear their words. He looks about him from the height. He sees the curling pillars of smoke ascend to the stars : he sees the spiry flames lift their dark-red head on high, above his hall. His shield is struck : his voice is up. “ Tura flames through heaven !”

WITH the thunder we start, at once, awake. We fly like lightning over the heath of Colra. Its dark stream meets us in the vale. Each bounds over it, on his spear, with speed. The son of Ratho tumbles from the height of his. “ Heed me not,” he cried ; “ but fly : fly fast, and save my love.”—In the current, twice he lifts his white eye above the stream : but, the third time, he sinks and dies.

WE came to Tura ; but it was too late. The flames were hiding, in dark-red ashes, their head : the ruin falls, in heaps, above the dying coals. The door, half-burnt, is still shut ; as the daughters of Morven left it, when they had retired to rest, in the midst

of their joy. O why did they not find the way to it, when the flame of the kindled heath awoke them!—No morning, with its calm voice, shall ever dispel your slumbers, daughters of the mountains! The voice of the lover, no more, shall say “ Awake.”

WE turn to the ruin our back. We bend, in sadness, over our spears; and loudly bewail our loss.—Our hundred helmets, and our hundred bossy shields; our coats of mail, and swords of light; our hundred hounds, the young children of the chase; our studded reins, the rulers of proud steeds; and all our banners, red-green meteors that streamed in air;—all these, were, that day, forgot; no hero remembered they were in the hall.—The burst of our grief was for our hundred fair, and for their little sons; that young grove of trees, growing in their robes of green, in the showery sun-beams of the spring.—They were young trees; but the flame caughted their green heads, and laid their beauty, amidst ashes, low.—Malvina, fair light! it is not without cause thou art sad; for all the bright beams that attended thy course are extinguished. One mournful grave contains the remains of thy sisters.

WE stood all day, like the dark stream which the ice hath bound in its course on the mountain of cold.—The darkness of night would return unperceived, if a voice had not awaked us from our grief.—It is the burst of the voice of Gara. We look for him in the tower where he had rested; but he is not there. His voice ascends from a cave. The sad mourner there is stretched in grief.—In the troubled dreams of his rest, the crackling flames had assailed his ear; he thought the foot of the foe approached. With a louder crash the roof falls in. The shield of the king, he thinks,

thinks, is struck. At once he starts awake. His hair had been caught in the opening end of the beam on which he slept: he leaves it there, with all its skin. He sees Tura low: he knows not that his blood, a red stream, descends. His pain, amidst his grief, is forgot. “ Virgins of my love, I will not survive you,” he said as, expiring, he fell on the heath *.

NOR didst thou die alone, O Gara: the days of many other heroes, in their darkly-silent heath, were few and mournful. They pined away like green leaves over which the mildew hath passed: they sink in silence amidst the mossy heath of the hill. Like ghosts that have not received their fame, they shunned the voice of joy †. They retired to their caves when rose the sound of gladness.

MAL-

* The *ur-sgeuls* give a different account of the death of Gara, and relate several strange stories concerning him, such as his having been beheaded on the thigh of Fingal, &c. but these tales are manifestly late and spurious, and therefore rejected.

incommodious; but they were useful in their own day, and most of them well adapted to the necessity of the times.

The first Christian missionaries, in these countries, were so sensible of the advantage to be derived from some of these superstitions, among men who were not yet ripe for bearing the clear light of truth, that they did not so much attempt to stop their source, as to turn them into a new channel. With them, for instance, whoever was not initiated into the Christian religion by baptism, was forced to wander after death, a mournful solitary shade, in the same state as formerly those who had not “ received their fame.” It was a notion in the Highlands till of very late, that the saint voices of children who had died unbaptized were heard in the woods, and other lonely places, bemoaning their hard fate.—All countries, as well as this, had once their superstitious æras; only they are the happiest, which have got the soonest through them.

† The melancholy state allotted, after death, for such as had not “ received their fame,” must have strongly excited those who believed it, to distinguish themselves by such brave and virtuous actions as might merit the praise of the bard. We justly laugh at many of the superstitions of our forefathers: but as, in the progress of all states, such a period must be, we have also reason to admire the wisdom with which the Druids managed this engine, so as to make it generally subservient to the interests of society.—The superstructures of superstition, like very old towers, appear now odd and fantastic, as well as extremely

MALVINA †! my cause of grief is great. Thou hast lost thy sisters, fair lights upon the mountains; but I survive the race of heroes. I search for them with my hands among the silent streams which they used to haunt; but their tomb is all I find. Alas! the children of the years to come shall not perceive even this; they will seek it on the mountains, but shall not find it.—The chief of the days that shall be, will stand on the green hill where Tura was. Cona rolls below him in its pebbly bed. Its stream wanders, losing its way, through woods; herds, along its banks, are seen to stray. Blue Ocean trembles at a distance. Isles lift their green, frequent heads, above its wave; and the bounding mariner is sailing towards the coast.—“This spot,” the chief will say, “is lovely: here raise for me, in view of whales and roes, the lofty house.”—They dig the green mound; the mound where Tura rose. Spears, half-burnt, lift before them their heads; broken shields, amidst ashes, begin to appear. “It is the tomb of heroes,” he will say; “shut again the narrow house.” He calls the gray-haired bard, and asks whose memory is contained in the tomb. The bard looks around for the light of the song: but his soul of age is dark; his memory has failed. He looks for his companions; but he sees their tomb. He stands, perhaps, a solitary tree like Ossian.—A solitary tree am

I,

† What follows of this poem is generally repeated by itself under the title of *Ossian a' casidb nam Fiann*; but as it seems to have been originally a part of *Lóega Taura*, it is here restored to it. The great number of names, towards the end of it, occasions such a difference in the recitation of that part, as made it impossible

to determine the true list with any degree of certainty. The catalogue of names, when repeated by itself, begins generally with these lines:

So far am faca' mi n Fhiann,
Chunacas ann Cian agus Conn,
Fionn fein is Oscar mo mhac,
Raoiní' Art is Diarmad doinn.

I, O bard, on the lone mountains; its companions, one by one, have forsook it: drooping, it mourns their departure.

MALVINA.

AND are not the sisters of Malvina, likewise, green trees that have failed? Yes; and no young plant, in their room, is growing. The virgins are no more, and my cause of wo is great. In the day I look for them; but no trace of their steps is to be found, save the green tomb with all its stones of moss. In the season of night I mourn for them; but they are lights that have retired from their blue place in the heavens. I am like the gray star of the morning, when, sickly and pale, it mourns behind its companions. It mourns for a little, but its own light will soon grow dim. The huntress, rising on the heath, shall look up, but shall not see it. "We too," she says to her companion, "one day shall fail."

OSSIAN.

THE heart of Ossian is sunk in the night of his grief. It is like the sun in his dark-crusted cloud: no ray of light bursts through the gloom: no smile alights on the mountain-top; the silent valley, around its dark stream, is mournful.—The heroes have withdrawn their light, which shone, like the brightness of my arms, around me.

MALVINA.

THE lights around Malvina have also failed. My heart is like the moon when her darkness grows. I draw, like her, my veil over my face, and lament my sisters in secret. Yes; fair lights, I will not forget you, though you have hid yourselves in darkness: your memory is mournfully-pleasent.

OSSIAN.

NOR can I forget you, rulers of the storm of battle, though you now rest in your peaceful slumbers. Your image still dwells in my soul, though I shall see you no more, as once I have done, on the brown heath.—Here have I seen Fingal, king of men; Oscar and Ryno, beams of light; Artho of beauty, and the dark-brown hair of Dermid. Here have I seen the son of Lutha, the meek; and that foul without guile, Conchana; with the son of Garo the bold, the three Finans, and Fed. Here burnished the helmet of Eth; here whistled in winds the dark locks of Dairo; and here streamed, like banners, the red hair of Dargo. Here Trenar grew like an oak; Torman roared like a stream; Ardan stalked in his pride, like a tree lifting its green head above the valley of mist; Murno and Sivellan, beside him, smiled over blue shields. Cleffamor of mighty deeds was here; and here the polished steel of Fercuth. Here arose the voice of Carril; and here thousands listened to the harp of Ullin. Here have I seen Moran and Fithil of songs; Connal of soft words and generous deeds; Lamdarga with his spear of blood; and Curach, whose arm was an host in the hour of danger.—And where art thou, Lugar, whose door was never shut; where is now thy voice, Fadetha of the loudest cry? where, Ronuro, are thy golden locks? where, Colda, are thy feet of deer? and where, Lumna, thy spear of battle? Where is mildly-looking Ledan; with Branno of arms, and Toscar of youth? Where are the hunters of the boar on Gormal, Machrutha, Colmar, and Comalo; Fillan, my brother of love, and ruddy Fergus of the mildest speech? Where is Crugal, blazing in his steel; and Dogrena, the light of heroes on the plain? Where, Aldo, is now thy beauty? and where,

Maronnan, the strength of thy blue shells? Who will shew me the steps of Duchomar, the black but comely; or the face of Cri-gal, beam of love? Suino, Sorglan, and Conloch, have also failed; the three mountain-streams in our battles. Connal, the meteor of death, is no more; nor Gaul, the whirlwind by which our foes were scattered.—Heroes of my love, you have failed; none of you remains to shed the tear on the tomb of Oslan. No friend shall raise my gray stone, or prepare, on the lonely heath, my narrow bed. No; the heroes of Morven have all failed. But their memory shall dwell in the soul of the bard.

MALVINA.

SISTERS of my love, you have also failed: but in the soul of Malvina you still remain. My departing breath shall be a song in your praise.—Yes, Evirchoma, Darthula, Sulmina, I feel your warm beams pass often over my soul. They are like sun-beams of autumn, when they fly over the dark-brown heath of Lena; and the watery bow, with all its tears, is nigh.—Gellama, Moina, Minona! you once shone on these hills, though dim is now your beauty. Melilcoma, Colmal, and Annir, did your form of comeliness continue! or are you, in your thin clouds, still admired by heroes? Crimora, has thy beauty lasted! Gelchoffa, where are the steps of thy loveliness?—Dersagrena, what is now become of all thy brightness? and where, Oi-thona, dost thou pour thy voice of love? Like the harp of the bard, when the chief of the people is dead, it was sweetly-mournful.—And, why should you be forgot, Evirallin and Clatho, fairest of all the lights that have shone on Morven! Joy is a stranger in Selma, since you have set in darkness: the songs of virgins ever since have ceased; and the harps of the bards

are silent.—But the tears and the voice of Malvina would fail.—Fair beams! you have left your sister mournful.—Dimly she shines upon the solitary mountains, and her steps are lonely. Pale and sickly is her countenance, as the face of the moon when it appears in heaven, a gray cloud, in the season of the sun, after all the stars of its course have retired.—Sisters of my love! you are stars that have failed; but your memory is still with Malvina.

OSSIAN.

* CEASE, Malvina, from thy tears. Thou makest the aged sad. As the night on her wings is almost past, so the night of our grief will soon be over. It is like the dream of the huntress of the roe, in the cleft of her rock. In thought she falls from the height of hills: she alights in the stream below: her soul, like the white-breasted bird of the stream, is now above, and now beneath the flood. She cries to her love, but he cannot come nigh her: her soul flies on clouds: she sees him behind her, mournful at the tomb of her rest. She longs for his coming, for she is sad.—Her own sigh awakes her: she lifts her head beneath her rock; and the dream of her terror is over.—Such a dream is our life, hunt-

ref

* In this place there is sometimes repeated a passage which seems rather to have been the opening of some other poem than any part of this. As it is tender and beautiful, I shall here give the translation of it.

OSS. Why flow thy tears like the stream of the fountain; why sighs thy voice like the gale of Lego?

MALV. Dost thou ask the cause of my grief, when the thistle grows in Selma, and the bats dwell in the house of Fingal? I listened to a noise in the blast; but it was not Cuthullin's car: I saw a beam

of light on Lena; but it was not the spear of Oscar.—Oscar! thy spear is a dweller of the tomb, and thy shield is become dim in Selma? I saw its bows; but it was covered with mist, and its many thongs had failed.

OSS. Love of my Oscar! we too shall fail, and Selma itself in its green tomb shall moulder.—But the slumbers of the tomb are sweet, O Malvina! let not thy soul grieve for those who dwelt in Morven. They have been beams that shone in heaven for a season, and their path was marked with day....

refs of woody Cona. Our friends, before us, shall soon awake us. In the voice of the reedy gale, dost thou not already hear them say, " Malvina and Ossian are soon to join us."—Malvina ! their sound to me is pleasant. It is like the murmur of Lora to the traveller of night, when he comes, wandering, over the desert. His face is towards Selma ; but it is hid in darkness. No light but the stormy meteor is seen on the heath. The narrow-winding path on the brow of the mountain is lost ; and the shriek of ghosts is heard around. At length he hears the voice of Lora, leaping from its broken rocks. His joy returns. " Selma," he says, " is nigh !"—Such * is the joy of Ossian wandering in dark-

T t_2 nefs,

* This passage and one or two more of the same kind, seem to rise somewhat higher in sentiment than the general strain of these poems. As this, in the opinion of many, may render their antiquity more doubtful, I have here inserted the original, in order to give such as understand it a fair opportunity of judging for themselves. Some of the lines, it is possible, may have been altered or interpolated; but as the most of them, from their antiquated air and obsolete expression, are manifestly old, I was loth to reject any of them upon a mere suspicion. Passages of this nature assume a very different look in a translation from what they have in the original, as they must be stript of their ancient garb, and dressed out in those expressions that are appropriated by modern composition. Besides, as all metaphors do not run equally well in all languages, nor the same images tally in one tongue so well as in another, several alterations must be made in order to give the style an uniform look. Some small variations, on this account, have been made in the passage

before us; particularly, the words rendered "the light of our joy shall not be darkened," are in the original "the light of our joy shall gleam as the blade of Luno." The genius of the English language requires frequently a little softening of those images which appear natural and unaffected in the Galic.

'Seo ait is fin Ossian anraach
Ri claisdin cagar uan tuiuhse
Ga chuirre' gu talla a shinnfir,
Ait-e-cail nan caomh air iontraise

Ann talla nam flath am bi bro
Ne faoi le deoir air a ghuaidh,
An t athair an cao' an t Oscar,
Sam mair oifail Mhuimhne?

An spionair Aoiibhir-aluin o Gradh,
 No'n loisgear aros nam Fiann ;
 An fgarar na cairdean o cheile,
 No'n dealuigh an t eug gach diais ?
 A reul na maife ! ni b' amhlaidh,
 Ach dealruidh mar lann an Luin ar follus ;
 Arn aoiibhneas mar an flaireag cha traigh
 Scho'n fhainlich mar aghaidh na Gelsiach.

At caoimh mar sholluis a chaolail
'Sna speura faoin os ar ciann
Cha bhi nis mo ; ach taomaidh
Le ceol aobhach an siteal tharluinn.
---Inghen Theoscair, uisfeng at sonar
Leig air faondra mata do thuirse.

ness, when a voice tells him, that, soon, he will reach his fathers.—Malvina, shall we not then meet the friends for whom we mourn; and, in their converse, again rejoice?—Shall there be any grief dwelling in the clouds; shall there be any mourner there?—Shall the father, in that place, lose his Oscar; or Malvina mourn over the tomb of her love?—Shall Evirallin, there, be torn from her Ossian; the hall, like Tura, be burnt; or the friends by death be divided?—No; fair beam! the light of our gladness shall not be darkened: our joy no more shall waste as the moon, nor shrink as the sea, and retire. Our friends, no more, shall be stars that forsake their blue place, and leave their companions mournful. No: they will always attend us in the joy of our course; they will pour their light and their glad song around us.—Give, then, thy tears to the wind, daughter of Toscar! cease from thy grief, Malvina, lonely bird!

C A T H L A V A*:
A P O E M.

THE A R G U M E N T.

RONNAN having sent his scout to assist Sulmina in her escape from her father's house, looks for her in vain all night. In the morning he consults an old Druid, from whom he learns that she had been intercepted and carried off by Lava, to whom her father had formerly promised her in marriage. Ronnan, with his followers, pursues Lava, and lands in the night upon his coast, where he meets with an old man, to whom he had early owed his life, and to whom he makes himself known after he had heard his story. Next morning, the two parties having engaged, Lava is slain; and Sulmina, who out of concern for Ronnan had come to the field in disguise, is found there, after the battle, mortally wounded. Ronnan, having established his old friend Runma in Lava's possessions, returns home; carrying with him the body of Sulmina. The poem is addressed to the son of Arar, who appears to have been a young bard.

THOU fittest by thine own blue stream, son of Arar; thy harp lies silent by thy side: why dost thou not praise the departed? Around thee, they hover on clouds, dark-bending over the place of their rest. But no voice is heard, save that of the rustling breeze, and murmuring brook. Why so silent, son of Arar? Dost thou not know the sons of fame are around thee?

“ THOU knowest the fame of the departed, Orran†! the deeds
of

* *Cathlava*, “ the battle of Lava.” This poem is sometimes called *Dan an fhir leidh*, “ the song of the gray man,” from the appearance made in it by an aged Druid.

† Since the order of the bards has ceased, almost all the ancient Galic poems are ascribed to Ossian. To the most, and best of them, he is justly entitled; but as this seems to be only an imitation of his manner

of other times are sunbeams around thy soul. Take then the harp, and let the bard of youth hear the song, that he may pour its light on future times. So shall their names be not forgot on their hills when thy harp is hung in thy silent hall; when thy voice of music is ceased, like the gale when it sleeps in the trees, in the calm evening of autumn."

My voice indeed shall cease, and my harp ere long be silent; but their fame shall not be forgotten. Thou mayest listen to their praise, son of Arar, and leave it to the bards of the years to come.

ON these hills lived Dumar of spears; his daughter of beauty moved graceful on his hills. Her harp was the joy of his hall. Lava saw the maid, and loved her. His arm was strong in the wars of Dumar, who promised him the fair Sulmina. But the maid refused her love, and gave her soul to Ronnan;—Ronnan of the fair hair and mildest look, whose dwelling stood by the stream of Struthorman. He heard of Sulmina's grief, and sent his scout to bring her to his hills.

SHE went with the son of night: but Lava met her on the heath. An oak and a thousand thongs confine the scout: a dark-wombed ship receives the maid. Loud were her cries, as they bounded over the ridgy deep: "Ronnan, relieve me; O Ronnan, relieve thy love!"

BUT he hears thee not, hapless maid! By the side of a stream he sits, thinking thou dost come.

"What detains thee, Sulmina, so long? What keeps my love from the stream of her promise? I listen, but hear not the soft tread

manner, the name of Orran is here retained, though that of Ossian is no less frequently used by those who repeat it.

Co b' shearr fios na thn fein,
Ossian, aii beus na dli'shalbh? &c.

tread of thy foot; it is but the brecze, rustling in the aged tree of Senar. Come, my love, like the roe to meet her companion: why are thy steps so slow on the heath of Gormul?

THE night is long without my love. Why stand ye still, ye travellers of the blue sky? Have you forgot to run your course; or are you, like me, waiting for your loves?—Sun of the morning, why dost thou forget to rise; why dost thou sleep so long in thy eastern chambers?—I know it; thou hast met with thy Sulmina; for I see not her steps in the heavens. Yes, you are together, fair lights! with your children, the lesser beams, in their green, trembling beauty, around you In your chambers of clouds, you are together, and there the night is short. But, here, it is long; for the blue eye of Sulmina is absent.—Lift thy yellow head from thy eastern cloud, son of the morning! Shine on the path of Sulmina, O sun! and bring her to the hill of her promise.

THE gray-dark morning comes. The sun shines; but it brings not his beloved. He sees a cloud rise before him. It assumes the form of Sulmina. His arms are spread; he flies to grasp the shape. But a blast, dark-rushing from the mountain, comes. Its path is through the form of Sulmina.

RONNAN feared the sign. He went to the aged Senar*. Under

* *Sean'ar*, “the man of age.” He appears to have been a Druid, living in his grove of oaks. His appearance is in the original so awful and striking, that the poem, as already observed, takes frequently its name from it.

An crith-thaice ri luig fein,
Fei' gheig dhoilleir dharaich,
Lan ogluidheachd:— a' crom-aomadh,
'S fhocafag aofda sios mu bhrollach.

—Air lar tha shuil a' dearcadh
Ach anam ann co'radh thaibhse.

The reply of this oracle is clear and laconic,

Macan ann fas cruidh,
Barca; thar euan, na deann;—
Shuilmhine! 'scruidh leam do ghlaoth,
A 'taomadh air tuinn gun fhurtacl'd!

It was from this pretension of the Druids to supernatural knowledge, and from the many

der the awful shade of his oak he finds him, leaning on his own trembling staff. His head of age stoops to the ground; his gray beard hangs down on his breast, and his dim eyes are fixed on earth. But his soul is mixed with the spirits of air, and his converse is with ghosts.

WHAT feest thou of my love, said Ronnan; what feest thou of Sulmina?

I SEE, said the aged, a youth tied to an oak: a vessel rides the wave. Sulmina pours her voice on the sea; loud are the shrieks of the helpless.

SAD is thy tale to me, said Ronnan.—Thou hast not heard its sadness all, said Senar.

MOURNFUL the chief retires. With his spear he strikes the gathering bogs. A hundred youths hear the sound, and start, amidst roes, from their beds of heath. We poured from all our hills to the stream of the chief. We passed the night in silence, for great was the grief of Ronnan. The voice of no harp was heard; the sound of no shell went round; no feast was spread; no oak gave its glimmering light, on that night, on the heath of Struthorman. Cold, drooping, and dark we sat, till day arose in the east. With morning we rush to the deep; and virgins, with grief, beheld from behind their rocks our flying sails.

BUT what are thy thoughts in the morning, Dumor; when no daughter of beauty looks, blue-eyed between her yellow locks, within thy darkened hall?—The daughters of the bow convened on the dew of the dawn. They moved forth to the chase, like fun-

many passages of this kind in the ancient *cond-fight*, which so long prevailed in the Galic poetry, that the notion of the *se-* Highlands, took its origin.

sun-beams on the hill of the east. They came to the secret hall of Sulmina, but it was silent. " Daughter of Dumor, art thou not yet awake? Thou didst not use to be the last on the hill of roes. Awake; arise: the sun is coming forth; and the stag, rising in his bed of moss, is stretching all his limbs. Daughter of Dumor, lift thy locks; this day we move forth to the chase of roes.—But ah! she is not here!"---Their sighs, like the shrill voice of the breeze, travel to the ear of Dumor.---Thy grief, Dumor, on that morning was great; but greater far was thine, O Ronnan!

NIGHT is gathering on the deep. The shore of Lava appears like mist. In the silence of night we reach its bay.

DARK and cold was that night, son of Arar; and unsheltered was the place of our rest, in the land of strangers. The obscured stars were seen, at times, through their torn robes of clouds. Some observed their colour of blood, and feared the sign. Frequent was the howling of gray dogs; nor unheard were the ghosts of our fathers. They looked out, at times, from their dark-skirted cloud; but their countenance seemed to be mournful.

RONNAN sat by a mossy stone. The shield of Struthorman hung above him, on a gray branch. The winds whistle through its thongs.---I sung, beside him, the tales of old, and the deeds of his father, when he fought, on the coast of Ullin*, with Commar of many hills.

—CEASE, said the chief, thy song, till the day shall light me to

U u

Lava; .

* *Ullin*, Ireland, or, more strictly, Ulster.

Lava ; for my wrath is kindled against his race, at the mention of the wars of Ullin. It was returning thence his father pursued the deer of our hills, and fought my early death. I was young ; I could lift no spear, nor draw from its sheath the sword. One of his men had pity on my youth ; he saved me from Lava's spear. Our arms are still in his halls ; my father did not live to demand them.

—BUT what low and broken voice is that from the heath ? Dost thou not perceive that aged warrior drawing near ? His one hand seems guided by a child ; on a spear, that seems a burden, leans the other. Every little rill stops his pace, and on the withered furze the aged stumbles.—Who art thou, aged wanderer of the night ? Why so late on the lonely heath ? Hast thou lost the delight of thy soul ; or hast thou cause of wo, like me ?

“ I THOUGHT I heard a voice. Thou knowest, my child, the voice of thy father. Was it not he, bidding me to follow him to the place of his repose ?”

“ No ; for I loved my father's voice, and I love not that which I hear. Their arms are like my father's arms ; but their voice is like the voice of strangers.”

“ AND dost thou see their arms ? Then fly, my child ; for they are sent by Lava. Fly thou ; and, if they will, let them slay me : for the place is good ; I feel the tomb of thy father.”

THE child with terror flew. The aged, trembling, stood. He stood, like the dun red-crested fowl of the heath, when the hunter, unperceived, comes nigh her brown sons. Quick, she bids her

her little children fly, to hide their heads in moss; and calls the danger to herself, till they are safe.

PEACE be to the aged, said Ronnan, as he took him by the hand. Peace be to the child, said I, as in my arms I took him back. We are not come from Lava; neither do our swords bring death to the feeble. No, their safety is behind our shields: therefore rest thou here, and tell the cause of thy tears.

“ Here I will rest: here is the clay-cold dwelling of my son. To mourn over it am I come with his child. How silent under this peaceful stone art thou now, my son; thou whirlwind in the storm of battle! Silent is thy tongue, and weak thy arm: thy beauty is decayed, like the faded flower; and thy strength, like the withered oak, hath failed. Lamor! where is the boast of man, when the clod is become thy fellow? Only one sun hath run his course since thou didst, like him, rejoice in thy strength, and gladden the dim eyes of thy father. Like him too, darkness, thick darkness, forms now thy covering. Yet his light shall return, and he will again lift his dewy locks in the east, and rejoice. But when shall thy long, long night, my son, be over; when shall the slumberer of the tomb arise from his silent dwelling? But thou listest thy head, my son, in other lands; and wanderest over brighter fields with heroes.—Weep on, O strangers! for he that is low was brave; and his soul, like your own, was a stream that flowed when the tale was mournful.”

WEEP for him we do, said Ronnan: but how is he fallen so soon; was it by the hand of Lava?

“ It was; and for no other cause, but that he loved the friendless. But in this my son was like his fathers. It was the mark of our

race, that we always stood up, though alone, to defend the weak. Our shield was a rock of brass before the unhappy; our spear was a tree that sheltered the stranger.—When I was strong in my arms of youth, as the tenant of this tomb was yesterday, I attended the father of Lava, when he took the spoils from the halls of Struthorman. My words were loud against him; for the heroes were absent, and there was none to oppose him. One child indeed there was, who scarce could wield, in place of a spear, a little arrow. That same he heaved, with all his infant-might, against the foe. On the foot of Commar the blunt end of it, harmless, fell. The gloomy chief turned his eye upon the child, and said, ‘Hereafter this child may lift a more dangerous spear against us. Let us leave him on that desart isle, where we wait the morning’s light.’—

We came to the isle; and often was the spear of Commar half-lifted over the son of Struthorman. My soul was grieved for the child of youth. He heard my sigh, and came near me. He admired the brightness of my arms; he clasped his little hand about my knee. He smiled in my face: the tear glittered in his blue eye. ‘My father!’ he said, ‘I love thee.’ My heart melted above him: my soul within me was like the rushing of a stream; like the straitened whirlwind in Atha’s cleft, when trees in the storm are bending. My secret tears fell in his yellow locks, as he hid his head in the skirt of my robe. As the roe, when she fears the hunter hath observed her haunt, the mossy bed where she hath hid her son,—or as the eagle of heaven, when she thinks that he hath seen her rock,—carries off, in the night, her young; so I took the child in my arms, when failed the light. I bore him through the waves to his mother, who wept like the cloud of the shower,

shower, upon the lonely shore. She gave me this spear, and called the name of her child Ronnan *. But of Ronnan have I heard no more, till Lava came from the wars of Dumor, and told the mournful maid of his love, that he had left him wounded by the stream of his land.---My son knew my love for Ronnan. 'I wish,' he said, 'I had been near to lift the spear of Struthorman. It would rejoice to defend its owner.'---His words came to Lava's ear. His people gathered around my son at the feast.---This grave may tell the rest. Mark it, strangers; and when you pass, shed over it a tear, and say, 'This is the tomb of Lamor.'---Yes, and it will soon be the tomb of Runma. But if ye know the friends of Ronnan, bring them that child, that they may defend him; and give them this spear, for they will know it."

THE sigh bursts from the breast of Struthorman's chief. He falls on the neck of the aged. "In me thou hast thy Ronnan!"

THEIR tears fall, mingled, on the grave of Lamor. Heroes drop their spears, and weep, with joy, around them.

---BUT what noise is that, like the fullen murmur of a stream, when the storm is about to burst? It is the foe with their numerous host. They have perceived our coming, and their steel faintly glimmers to the dawn of the morning. Their light is like the thin stream of a rock, when sun-beams, bursting from between two clouds, are travelling through it.

RONNAN hears the song of battle, and the joy of his countenance

* *Ro'-thonnan*, "through waves;" alluding to the manner of his escape. He may have, probably, been the father of that Ma'ronnan (or *son of Ronnan*) mentioned in Ossian's battle of Lora:

Freiteach bliadhna ri mur Phinn
Thug an diais bu cheoin dearg dreach,
Deagh Mbac-Ronnain nan sleagh geur,
Is Aildhe nach d'eur neach.

nance returns. He strikes his shield. His heroes are around him, a thick cloud, the gathering of the tempest on Dura.

As the spirit of night moves, with the collected blast of heaven in his course, when he prepares to pour his force on the groves of Ardven; when oaks hear its sound at a distance, and, trembling for its approach, already shake their leaves: So rushed Ronnan to the battle on the head of heroes.—Nor less terrible is the course of Lava. The sound of his people is like thunder in clouds, when Lara's fields are dismal. A thousand helmets nod on high; like a grove in flames is the blaze of spears.

BUT who shall tell the rage of battle? Thou hast seen, son of Arar, two black rocks rolling from opposite hills to meet in the valley below; a cloud of smoke rises behind, and follows the tract of each: such was the terrible onset of the people. Swords clash, and shields resound: heads and helmets fall: the dead are mixed with the dying: blood runs in a thousand streams, and the spirits of fallen heroes ascend on its thin airy smoke. See! to the edge of every cloud they cling, as clings the bur to the eagle's wing when she leaves the valley of dun roes, and flies to Moma's cloudy top.

BUT what eagles are these two, that still contend with rustling wings on the heath? No gray kid, no red-crested cock is the prey for which they strive, as from side to side they bound, and pour death in streams from their steel.—See! one stoops on his knee. His shield supports the half-fallen chief, as the rock supports the pine, which the storm has half-overturned on Dunora.—Yield thy spear, said Ronnan; restore my beloved Sulmina. I seek not the death of my foes, when they lie before me on earth.

YIELD I must, Lava replied, for my blood is shed ; the stream of my life hath failed.—Sulmina must be thine. Behind that rock, in her cave she rests. She looks down from its door on a blue stream, where waves an aspen tree.—Sulmina must be thine : but let her raise my tomb ; for she was the love of Lava the unhappy.

He ceased. He sunk on his shield ; and his people fled. Ronnan bade us spare them in their flight, as, swift, he ascended the rock to find the place of his love.—The blue stream he finds ; and the cave on its woody bank. But no Sulmina is there. The lone wind sounds in the empty womb of the rock. The withered leaf wanders there, on its rustling wing ; and no tract is found, but that of the lonely fox.

“ WHERE art thou, O Sulmina, my love ! Dost thou hide thyself from Ronnan ?—Come, Sulmina, from thy secret place ; come, my love, it is thy Ronnan calls thee !”

BUT thou callest in vain, son of grief ; no one replies to thy voice, save the rock and echoing stream.

AT length the howling of his dog is heard, in the field of fallen heroes. Thither he turns. There he finds Sulmina. She had rushed to the battle to aid her Ronnan. But death, on the point of a wandering arrow, came : its barbed head is in her breast of snow. The sparkling light of her eye is become dim ; the rose of her cheek is faded.

RONNAN, pale like her own half-breathless corse, falls on her neck, as drops the ivy when its oak hath failed. Sulmina half-opens her heavy eyes. The peaceful shade of death closes them again, well pleased to have seen her Ronnan.

LONG we bended our heads in silent grief, and shed our tears around Sulmina. At length the slow steps of Runma came. He spoke the words of the aged.

“ WILL sorrow recal the dead; will the cries of the living dispel their heavy flumbers? No; they still sleep on, careless of the cry of the mourner. But they are only gone a little before us to the land of their rest. A few more fleeting days, on their silent, swift-gliding stream shall pass, and our steps shall be in air with our friends. Do you not already see the cloud-skirted robe prepared for Runma. Nor shall Ronnan be long behind. The stream of grief wastes the bank on which his beauty grows. The young tree, that lifts there its green head, already half-bends over it in its fall. Let, then, our deeds of fame be many, while we can; and let not our winged days be wasted in mourning—Grief is a calm stream, O Ronnan! the steps of its course are silent. But it undermines in secret the beauteous flower that grows on its green bank: drooping it hangs its withered head; it falls while its leaf is but tender *.”

RONNAN arosc; but still he was sad. He gave the halls of Lava
to

* The following lines have in the original all the beauty of the objects which they describe, and all the smoothness of the stream which they speak of. Such soft and mournful sounds as *ei*, *ai*, *ui*, *iu*, *uai*, &c. occur so often in them, that the eye or ear, of even a stranger to the language, will at once perceive that they are expressive of some of the mournful and tender feelings. In this respect they are

an illustration of the remark made in a former note, p. 310, 311.

The Bron mar an frithan diamhair
Aig iarruidh fui' iochdar na bruaiche;
Tha 'n gallan cheanadh ag aomadh,
A thog ri thaobh a ghengan aillidh,
Tuiteadh ar brou, mata, 's eireadh ar clu,
'S ar n uin' a' ruith air barraibh fgiathan.
'S ciuin, a Ronnain, ceime a bhoirin,
'S e caithe ge foil a bhilidh uaine;
Tha 'n t ur-ros air a chaithe fui' bhona
'S gu trom, trom, tha cheann a' fsearga.

to Runma and the son of Lamor: Fermor and the scout of night he left to defend them.

WE brought Sulmina over the waves in Ronnan's ship; and here we raised, amid sighs, her gray stone. Here too rests the youthful Ronnan, whose arm was once so strong, whose form was once so fair. His days were sad and few, on the hill; he did not long survive his beloved. Under that moss-clad stone he was laid, where grows the rustling grass. He rests beside his Sulmina. One lone thistle bends between their two gray stones its head, and sheds on either side its aged beard. Often when I sit here to the glimmering light of the moon, I see the faint forms of the two on its watery beams. I take my harp, and sing their praise. Glad, they depart on the wing of winds.

WHY art thou so silent, son of Arar, when the children of fame are around thee?



THE DEATH OF ARTHO*:

A P O E M.

THE ARGUMENT.

ARDAR, lamenting the loss of his son Calmar, is informed of the death of his other son Artho, as he looked for his return from battle. The son of Arman comforts him by relating to him the gallant behaviour of his son. He informs him also of his own passion for Colval, who had been in love with Artho.—Her death is related; with the despair of Artho: and the poem concludes with some reflections of Ardar upon their fate, and upon his own situation.

SAD are my thoughts while alone! Thy memory comes, with all its grief, on my soul; Calmar, chief of heroes. Thou wert a sun-beam to thy friends in peace; a flash of lightning to thy foes in war. My son rushed, like a whirlwind, to the battle: many a young oak has been strewed in his troubled path. The return of his renown was like the sun when it sets. The heart of the aged, over him, was glad; I blessed the mighty in battle.

X x 2

BUT,

* This poem, which goes under the name of *Bas Airt 'ic Ardair*, or *Tuire' an Aofda*, appears to be the work of some ancient, but unknown, bard. Possibly it might have been composed by Ardar himself. At least no other poet appears throughout the piece; in which circumstance it differs from all the preceding poems. It begins with the following lines.

'S cianail m'signe's mi 'm aonar,
Calmar ag eiridi. anu sinualte;
'S a' liona mo chroidhe le mulad,
O nach faic mi tuille mo dhea' mhae.
Bu chosail e'n fioth ri gatha greine,
'S am boile-chatha ri teine speuran;
Bu lionar gallan auns na roidibh,
'S e ruith mar ionna ghaoth fios gu eo'rag.
Eliodh a phille' mar ghrian a' faire,
'S an taoifa le gean cuir falt air.

BUT, Calmar! thou art now no more; and the sun that shone in the house of thy father is set. Fuardo was a storm that seized my early sun; in one morning he extinguished all his beams. Darkness, since that day, dwells in Ardlia; for Artho is but a faint star, beside the light of his brother. Yet thou, my son, art also brave. But ah! thy arm may fail in the first of thy battles; for thy father cannot defend thee. I attempt to lift the spear, but I fall to earth when it does not support me. I attempt to lift the shield, but my knees tremble under its burden. O that I saw my only son return, in the midst of his renown, from battle!

BUT who comes in the beauty of youth, and stately as an oak of the mountain? His fair locks, like leaves, are waving around him. He is of the race of Arman, from the battle of the spears he comes.—Hail, thou beam of youth! whence are thy wandering steps? Art thou from the battle of heroes? Say, does Artho live; does he return to his gray-haired father? But why should I ask? thy mournful looks tell that he is now no more. Soon hast thou left me, my son, in darkness; Artho, shall I no more behold thee? —Calmar is gone; Artho is low: O that I too had been with my children! In the evening of life I am left without a son; like a blasted oak that is left alone on Malmor. The breeze shall descend from the mountain, and the blast shall blow from the desert; but no green leaf of mine shall either meet. The showers of the spring shall come, but no bough of mine shall flourish; the sun shall smile through the drops of dew, but no green branch of mine shall behold it. The wind whistles in my gray mossy head; its voice is, “Thou shalt soon be low.”—One comfort is all I expect before then; tell me, son of youth, how fell my son?

“ WITHOUT his fame thy son did not fall in battle; the mighty marked, with wonder, his course, as he strode in the midst of foes. Like the thunder that breaks the groves; like the lightning that lies low their green heads, when sudden bursting it spreads terror, and again returns; so fought, so fell thy hero. The foes were troubled at the sight of Artho; they fled, they fell. Death from the hand of Artho roared behind them, like the rolling of a rock from Malmor, when it crushes the trees in its course, till it sinks in the lake below them. Such were thy deeds, son of fame! But the arrow of death came in the blast; and the people are sad, for mighty was he that is low.”

PLEASANT to me is thy tale, son of Arman; it is like the beam that dispels the clouds of night. Thou hast fought like thy fathers in their battles of youth, O Artho! and thy name, like theirs, shall be found in the song. When the valiant fall, a streak of light behind them is their fame; their friends behold the beam, and are glad. But the feeble die, and are remembered no more; their friends are beheld with scorn by mighty men. They walk in the silent valley alone, and shun the eye of heroes.

BUT, son of Arman, why that sigh; why these wandering looks? Hast thou lost a brother of love; or is thy soul troubled for the spouse of thy youth?

NOR have I lost a brother of love; nor have I a spouse that longs for my return from the battle. My sighs are for the fair of Carnmor; for her my wandering looks. My thoughts are of her in the day; of her are my dreams in the night.—But her soul is full of Artho. She saw the youth move to battle, and sad was her troubled soul. She came to that hill, and followed him far

with

with her looks. Her mournful eye was wet, and her sighs were heard by secret streams. "On this cold rock," she said, "I will sit, till Artho of love return."---I am come to meet the sun-beam of my soul. But the rock is dark; no beam of light is nigh it. The rock without Colval is dark; but darker still is my soul with all its grief, for I see not the steps of my love. I see not her that was fairer than the down of the mountain, or the new-fallen snow on the waving tree *.---But who comes from Malmor with disordered looks?---It is she—it is my love: but ah! how changed! Pale is her cheek, and wild her look; she has heard that her beloved is low. But hark! she speaks.

COLVAL.

WHAT detains thee, O Artho! ere now thou didst promise to return. Ill-boding thoughts distract my soul. Shouldst thou fall, my love, can I survive thee, and wander on dark mountains lonely?—No: tear the ivy from the oak, tear the eagle from her dun-robed prey, and tear the offspring from its parent of love; but tear not my soul from Artho.—But who is it I see? Is it my love returning from the battle? Ah! no; it is the son of Arman.---Trouble me not, O Farno; I cannot love thee. What hast thou done with Artho? Will my love return no more; is he low in the strife of steel? Yes, he is low; I see his robe in the passing mist.---Leave me not, O Artho; leave not thy love; for she too comes on her cloud. Not hills with all their deer, not mossy streams with all their roes, can give joy to Colval when thou art gone. Artho, I come; O leave me not, my love!

FARNO.

* Two lines in the original of this passage are so beautiful, that they frequently enter into descriptions of female

Ba ghile bian na canach fleibhe,
No mi-shmeachd air bharr a gheuga.

FARNO.

All ! she falls ; she faints ; she dies away.—And art thou gone, fairest of maids ? In thee alone did my soul delight, though thy heart was fixed on Artho. Thou art gone, and what charms has life to me ? No, farewell to all the delights of youth ; farewell to all the joys of life. Farewell, ye hills of Carnmor* ! and farewell, ye mossy towers of Ardlia : Colval is gone, and pleasure is no more

to

* So great was the attachment of the ancient Caledonians to their hills, which supplied them with the means of subsistence at so easy a rate, that we often find them not only taking a solemn farewell of them at death, but also imagining that a part of their future happiness consisted in seeing and travelling over those scenes which in life afforded them so much pleasure. Of this, the following extract from a small poem, called *Miann a Bhaird*, affords a beautiful instance.

—“ But hark ! I hear the steps of the hunter. O may the cry of thy hounds, and the sound of thy darts, thou bender of the yew, be often heard around my silent dwelling ! My wonted joy, when the chase arose, shall then return, and the bloom of youth shall glow in my cheek that was faded.—The marrow in my bones shall revive, when I shall hear the sound of spears, the bound of dogs, and the twang of strings.—With joy I shall spring up alive, when they cry ‘ The flag is fallen !’

“ I shall then meet the companion of my chase ; the hound that followed me late and early. I shall see the hills that I loved to frequent, and the rocks that were

wont to answer to my cries. I shall see the cave that often received my steps from night ; the cave where we often rejoiced around the flame of the oak. There our feast of deer was spread ; there Treig was our drink, and the murmur of its streams our song. Ghosts shrieked on their clouds, and the spirits of the mountain roared along their hollow streams : but no fear was ours ; in the cave of our rock secure we lay.—I shall see Scur-elda tower above the vale, where the welcome voice of the cuckow is early heard.—I shall see Gormal, with its thousand pines ; I shall see it in all its green beauty, with its many roes and flights of fowl.—I shall see the isle of trees in the lake, with the red fruit nodding over the waves.—I shall see Ardven, chief of a thousand hills : its sides are the abode of deer ; its top the habitation of clouds.—I see—but whither, gay vision, art thou fled ?—Thou hast left me, to return no more.

“ Farewell then, my beloved hills ; farewell, children of youth. With you it is summer still : but my winter is come ; no spring, alas, is to succeed !

—“ O place me by the green side of my stream ;

to me. I rush back to the field of death, and open my breast to some feeble steel. Then Colval I shall see again.

ARDAR.

BLESSED may you be, children of youth! lovely were your souls; but why so soon departed? Happy the young who die in the days of their joy. They feel not the burden of years; they see not the days of trouble: Days in which the sun on the mountains is dim; and dark years creep slowly on the heath of mourning. Slow rolls the tide of years to me, O my fathers! Why do I wander on Ardlia when my race hath failed? Come, ye fathers of Ardar! convey me to the place where the sons of my love repose. ---Is that your voice I hear in the breeze?—Yes, and I go in the rustling of your course: in the fold of your wandering blast I go. There Artho and Calmar I shall see again; and sad and alone I shall be no more.

stream; place the shell, and my father's shield, beside me in my narrow house.--- the hall where Ossian and Daöl rest. The evening of my life is come, and the bard shall no more be found in his place!"

F I N I S.

